THE INDEPENDENT

ON SATURDAY

TODAY'S NEWS

Life for wife murderer

An RAF squadron leader who murdered his wife because of an obsessive love for a young Serbian interpreter was jailed for life over his "planned, callous and coolly executed act". At the end of a 13-day trial at Norwich Crown Court, Mr Justice Gage told Nicholas Tucker, 46, that he had no doubt that the murder of his wife Carol was motivated by the fact that he was besorted with 2!year-old Dijana Dudukovic, whom he had met during service with the UN in Bosnia. Page 9

Cover-up lawyer jailed

A solicitor and her former policeman lover who ruined their careers by telling lies about his drink driving offence were jailed at the Old Bailey yesterday. Penelope Schofield, 35, wept as she was jailed for perverting the course of justice. Detective Constable Nigel Philips was jailed for 16 months. Schofield was told by the Recorder of London, Sir Lawrence Verney: "I have to bear in mind not only your personal position, but also the concern of the public that a practising solicitor had on this occasion, practised deception and deception against the public makes it essential I pass a prison sentence." Page 9

China will be worst polluter

Today China produces only a tenth of the pollution of the United States. But by the year 2015, it may overtake the US as the world's biggest producer of greenhouse gases. The big problem is coal and the dirty industries that burn it. But it may be too late to reverse what is happening. Page 17

Blair warns farmers

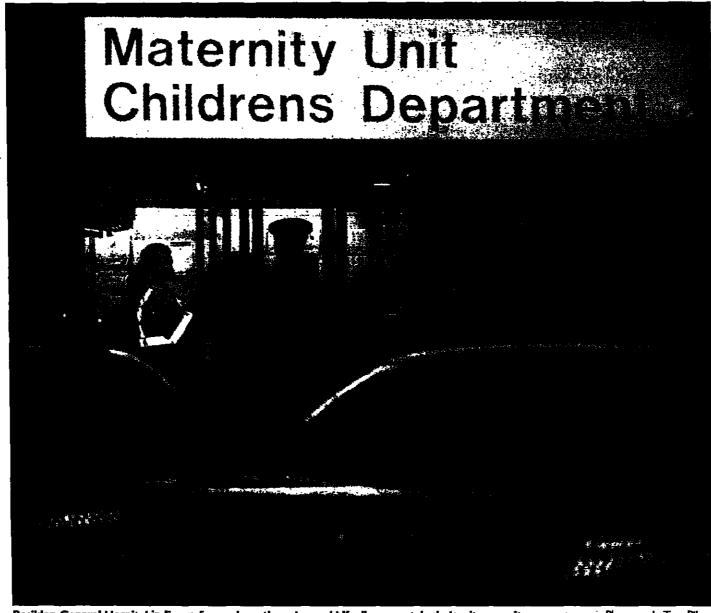
As farmers continued their protest over beef. Tony Blair said he understood their concerns but warned that they must stay within the law. He said: "We fully understand the distress and difficulties of farmers and we have been working to assist them.

"The taxpayer will pay £1.4 billion this year in support of the British beef industry and of course we do everything we can to support them. It is essential, however, that the rule of law must be upheld." Page 8

FATHER Time Off, page 2 ELEVISION The Eye ROSSWORDS Time Off, pages 5 & 14

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Parents' nightmare as tiny baby is snatched



Essex police were engaged in a race against time to find a newborn baby girl snatched from her mother's side in a maternity unit. Gare Gamer was at Basildon Hospital to hear a harrowing tale.

The father was making a telephone call to relatives to share the joyful news of the birth when the baby was grabbed from her cot at the foot of her dozing mother's bed, just three hours after being born.

The baby, named Karli, was last seen being smuggled out of the hospital just before 1pm under the left arm of a blonde-haired woman, aged between 25 and 30. Karli had not been fed since being born at

At the time of the kidnap, Karli's mother. Tanya, was still drowsy from the anaesthetic. But the woman in the bed opposite saw what happened and raised the alarm. Maternity nurses chased after

No doors in the unit were locked - they are only locked at night - so park. She was last seen leaving the hospital grounds in the passenger seat of a black Renault Laguna being driven by a man. They accelerated at high speed the wrong way down a short road with headlights blazing. Police said it was possible that Kadi was not with them because ground floor anything could have

bappened". At a press conference Detective Superintendent David Bright, of Essex Police, appealed to anyone with any information to contact the emergency line immediately, on 01245 490990. He said people should be alert to "anyone buying baby food, baby clothes or seeking advice about how to look after a baby".

As darkness fell, the hours passed, and temperatures dropped. concern grew for Karli's welfare. Christopher Welch, consultant

the kidnapper but failed to catch obstetrician and clinical director of maternity and paediatrics at the hospital, said: "As the hours march

on our concern gradually deepens ... it took less than a minute for the this baby is small. She requires food, woman to go from the first floor to milk and warmth: If she goes withthe ground floor and out into the car out, she will be seriously damaged." He added that, without adequate milk and fluid, Karli's blood sugar

> levels would be affected, causing dehydration and brain damage. Karli weighed 6lb 15oz and was wearing a hospital smock and was

wrapped in a blanket. The parents, who were a "very dis-"from the maternity ward to the tressed state" last night have two other children Nicola, 9, and Ben, 4. Yesterday was tanya's 30th birthday. Det Supt Bright said: "The mother

is never ever going to forget this day. What a terrible, terrible day. It's lovely to give birth on your birthday. Terrible to lose it hours later." Sixty polices officers were preparing to spend the night searching the hospital "top to bottom" as well as the grounds. They were examining video footage - evidence that is

hospital following the inquiry into the

video cameras were installed at the section.

kidnapping of baby Abbie Humphries in Nottingham.

However, the hospital was auxious to stress that now was not the time to apportion blame.

Sue Jennings, chief executive of the hospital, explained that following the full security review after Abbie's abduction, the hospital had decided against tagging babies, adding: "In this case the tagging

wouldn't have made any difference. Measures that were taken included issuing specific instructions to parents not to let their child go with anyone they did not know. She added that, for a long time, children had not been left unsupervised in the nursery area. Asked if she felt the hospital could have had tighter security, she said: "It's always easy to do more and, until we know precisely what's happened in this case that's all I can say. We will have a future review to make sure that any other

loopholes are tied up." Tanya was admitted at 3pm on Thursday. Her pregnancy was full only available to them because 13

term and she opted for a caesarian

Why steal a baby? page 3

INSIDE TODAY

TAX: do you face a fine? SEE PAGE II

Lies and schmaltz: Mary Braid's fury about Winnie's 'game show 15/NEWS

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Should you recycle this paper? Maybe not

When you've finished with this newspaper, will you, a little smugly, take it to be recycled? Charles Arthur, Science Editor, discovers that some environmentalists now think you would be better to burn it instead.

A growing number of environmentalists who have carried out detailed economic studies of the costs of recycling - a practice that has an almost religious place in the greener lifestyle - believe it may be environmentally unfriendly.

The higher you value the environment, the better incineration comes out," according to Matthew Leach, an energy policy analyst at Imperial College's Centre for Environmental Tech-

recycled, and the paper disposal business in Europe handles 130 kilograms (286 pounds) per head annually. Now Leach says: burn it - for instance in your fireplace. You don't speed up global warming, since 99 per cent of virgin paper comes from sustainable forests, not rainforest. And you can use the heat to save electricity.

This is not the sort of answer that consumers, who for years have been trained to obediently collect their newspapers and dump them at the local collection site, expect to bear. But it gets worse. Those local collection sites, and the few companies which in this country pulp the papers, are the worst model of recycling you can dream up. Instead, we should have kerbside collection, and recycling (or incineration) at as many locations as possible. Why? Because the fuel used by the lorries transporting it adds more to global warming than the process of making fresh paper.

This debate seems to have become fashion-That's a startling thought, given that used pa- able recently," said Marianne Grieg-gran of the per is rapidly becoming a raw material: in west- International Institute for Environment and Deem Europe more than half of newsprint is velopment yesterday. "There have been scientif-

ic papers in the past four years arguing that recycling might not be the best solution.

There are some glimmers of reassurance. It is always good to recycle aluminium cans, because so much electricity is needed to extract the metal from its ore, bauxite. Saving electricity means saving fossil fuel. Recycling aluminium "saves about 95 per cent of the energy," said Amelia Craighill, of the environment department at the University of East Anglia. Glass recycling is less clear-cut - but recycling can make significant energy savings. So yes, recycle that wine bottle.

But paper recycling is less simple. Maybe it should be composted on a landfill - where the methane gas produced could be burnt for energy. Or it should be burnt outright. Or it might be recycled. The environmentalists are still arguing.

The European Commission though seems to have made its mind up already. Its 1994 directive on waste management insists that by 2001, 50 per cent of paper waste should be recovered and recycled. Perhaps someone should tell them about

A romantic Christmas? It's as simple as ABC

Already wondering how you are going to survive the festive season? The marriage guidance specialists Relate have compiled a Christmas quiz to see whether your relationship, at least, will last as long as the turkey left-

Cherida Fletcher, manager of the organisation's Wolverhampton branch, which devised the questions, said that couples should use their quiz in place of more traditional Christmas diversions, "to decide whether they need to make that appointment with Relate straight away."

The questions are as follows:

- 1. Did you decide together who was coming to stay at Christmas?
- A. Yes B. No C. Haven't decided 2. What do you usually buy first for Christmas?
- A. Drinks B. Your partner's present C. Other people's presents 3. What do you buy for your partner?
- A. A surprise B. Gift vouchers or money C. You wait for the sales
- 4. Do you remember what your partner bought you last year? A.Yes B.No C.You didn't get anything
- 5.Did you have to change it?
- A. No B. Yes C. It broke before you could use it



6. When was the last time you spent a quiet Christmas night together? A. Can't remember B. When the telly broke C. Never 7. How would you like to be treated at Christmas?

- A. Like you're special B. Like a lover C. You want to be left alone to
- 8. What springs to mind when you think about Christmas?
- A. Arguments B. All the work C. Getting drunk 9. Would you love one of those Christmases that everyone else seems
- A. Yes B. They're just a myth aren't they? C. You just want to sleep 10. Do you wish those messages on the late-night radio programmes
- were for you and... A. From your partner? B. From your lover? C. What late-night mes-

According to Relate, the answers give "an accurate portrayal of the state of a relationship". Their conclusions are as follows: Mostly As, and

want. Bs, and you've been disappointed too many times already. "If most of your answers are Cs, you and your partner need to do some serious talking about how to have fun together," says Ms Fletcher. "Maybe

ZITS

The day started with

ME AT BREAKFAST.

HY MOH RAGGING ON

you should consider talking to Relate before it's too late."

THEN MY DAD HAD

to join in.

PEOPLE



Tracey Emin: Back on Channel 4 days after her last foul-mouthed, drunken performance

Moralists primed as rebel artist goes back on TV

arts show on Channel 4 on Tuesday night, conceptual artist Tracey Emin is back on the channel tonight in another discussion programme.

Ms Emin, who appeared on The Future of Painting as drunk as a Clyde welder with the language to match before walking off set, is to appear with the the novelist Will Self. Mr Self, who is hosting the show, is no stranger to controversy himself.

The show is Something of the Night, a pilot latenight discussion programme that will look at the week's events and will discuss whether Britain in the aftermath of the general election and the death of Diana is a more radical, less puritanical, place.

Mr Self did his best to test this thesis himself earlier this year when he was exposed as having smoked heroin on John Major's campaign plane during the election campaign, an incident that ultimately cost him his job on the Observer.

Just in case the combination of Ms Emin and Mr

Fresh from her successful attempt to liven up a turgid Self is not enough for television moralists the programme plans to air the video of the Prodigy's new single "Smack My Bitch Up". The video features scenes of full frontal nudity and drug-taking and has been banned by other broadcasters. The programme starts at 11pm.

To save the moralists the trouble of complaining about the show, Channel 4 has invited on as a guest Daily Mail columnist Paul Johnson, the man who labelled the channel's former chief executive Michael Grade "Britain's pornographer in chief". Presumably he will be able to object to the channel's output on

The other guests, the novelist Martin Amis, the journalist Nick Cohen and the celebrity therapist Susie Orbach will be hard-pressed to get a word in. But Channel 4 is not taking as many risks as at

first we might think. The programme was pre-record-

- Paul McCann, Media Correspondent

Man, 76, escapes wheelchair drink-drive charge

A drink-driving charge against a war veteran caught licence off me when I haven't got one?" The veterdoing 8mph in his battery-powered wheelchair-style an of the Burma campaign in the Second World War limit when he was stopped by police outside his home ving licence to use it.

But the case was dropped yesterday after the Crown Prosecution Service decided it was not in the

public interest to pursue the charge. Mr Hammond said: "I couldn't believe it when they

PRETTY SOON, THEY'RE BOTH COMING AT ME!

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

WOW! I THOUGHT I WAS

THE ONLY ONE WHO CAME FROM A DYSPUNCTIONAL

buggy has been dropped. Sam Hammond, 76, was said he had bought the buggy, which is powered by allegedly more than twice over the legal drink-drive two 120-volt batteries, because he did not need a driin Pitsmoor, Sheffield, South-Yorkshire: --- He added: "I've never had a licence in my life

The great-grandfather, who suffers from heart because I don't think I would be a competent driproblems and arthritis, was arrested and fricked in a ver. It's all a bit daft really, I was hardly rolling about cell for six hours after the breath-test proved posi- drunk and being a danger to anybody, certainly not with drink-driving last Sentember. at eight miles an hour. I had travelled two miles home from the pub when they stopped me. "Even if I had bumped someone I was only

going 8mph - that's the scooter's top speed - and I'm not sure that they would have felt it. But next time arrested me - how were they going to take a driving I go for a drink I'll use a cab."

Letters sold for £90,000

An archive of letters and papers which tell the remarkable story of a Jewish woman, whose struggle to survive the Second World War resulted in her marrying a Nazi, fetched £90,000 at auction yesterday.

The collection charts the suffering of Edith Hahn, a law student in Vienna at the time of the Anschluss. who spent time in two Nazi labour camps. Many of the 250 or so letters sold by Sotheby's in central London are written to two men: Hahn's first and greatest love, "Pepi", a fellow law student Dr Joseph Rosenfeld, and Werner Vetter, a member of the Nazi Party who fell so deeply in love with her that, despite knowing she was a Jew, persuaded her to marry him.

The collection was bought jointly by two private bidders, businessman Dalck Feith and his colleague Drew Lewis, who want to lend the papers to The Holocaust Museum in Washington.

UPDATE

EDUCATION

Funds for further learning dry up

Funds for further-education students are steadily declining, it was disclosed yesterday, as the cost of advertising the Government's policy on unition fees exceeded £330,000.

In a written answer from the office from the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, it was revealed that average funding per fulltime student in further education had dropped from £3,080 to £2,860 since the 1993-4 academic year.

In a separate question, the office was asked how much the Government had spent on advertising on commercial radio, television and newspapers in relation to its policy on tuition fees for university students.

The reply, from Kim Howells, minister for lifelong learning, states; "The cost for advertising, in relation to the policy on tuition fees for university students, is, for commercial radio, £222,209 and for the national press,

ater

Lord



Truce fails to stem Ulster violence

A total of 334 people have been charged with terrorist-related and serious public order offences in Northern Ireland this year, it emerged yesterday.

The figures were revealed in a written answer from the security minister Adam Ingram to the Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble. Mr Trimble had asked "how many persons have been charged with offences in connection with paramilitary beatings in 1997".

Many of the offences took place during the current ceasefire, which began in July. Despite this, the office of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Mo Mowlam, has said she is satisfied the ceasefire is genuine.

The previous IRA ceasefire from September 1994 to February 1996 was broken by the Canary Wharf bomb, which killed two people.

Letters page

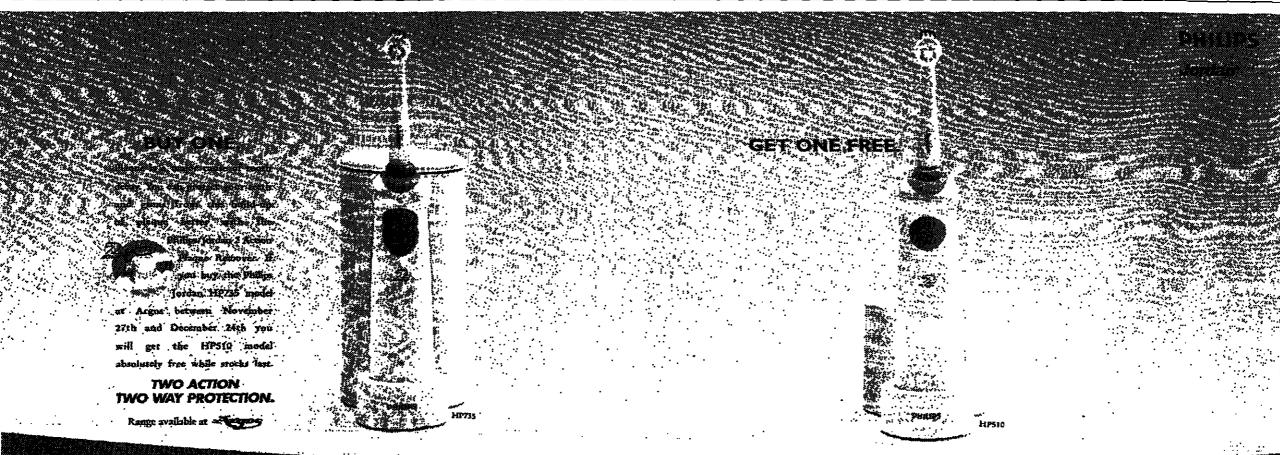
We apologise to readers who received editions vesterday containing the previous day's letters page. This was due to a production error. We would also like to point out that the Bluebird evening in today's magazine is sponsored by Taittinger champagne

CONTENTS

l le		Decretables
Leading stories	3	Despatches -
Home news	4	Environment
Race hate	5	Saturday story
Home news	6	Leader, letters 2
Politics	7	Comment 2
Beef crisis	8	Obituaries 2
RAF murder	9	Business 23-2
Money	10	Big picture 2
in the courts	12	Sport Time Off, 16-2
World News	14	TV & Radio The Ey

TOURIST RATES

ĺ			
Australia (dollars)	2.38	Italy (lira)	2,82)
Austria (schillings)	20.13	apan (yen)	212.75
Belgium (francs)	59.19	Malta (lira)	0.62
Canada (\$)	2.30	Netherlands (guilders)	3.22
Cyprus (pounds)	0.83	Norway (kroner)	11.67
Denmark (kroner)	10.97	Portugal (escudos)	291.11
France (francs)	9.57	Spain (pesetas)	241.07
Germany (marks)	2.87	Sweden (kroner)	12.65
Greece (drachmei)	453.20	Switzerland (francs)	2.32
Hong Kong (\$)	12.48	Turkey (lira)	318, 105
ireland (punts)	1.10	USA (\$)	1.62
 			Source: Thomas Cook
		Rates for ma	Domion purposes only
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Let's make things better

IN MONDAY'S INDEPENDENT



Deborah Ross interviews **Lord Chadlington**



The Prodigy: can they still start the fire?



Jenny Agutter: flies back in Peter Pan

What is it that makes a woman want to steal a baby?

HOSPITALS' **SECURITY DILEMMA**

Hospital authorities had hoped they were winning the battle against baby snatching. But lan Burrell says that vital lessons in security have not been learned.

One might have thought that the hysteria which followed the snatching of Abbie Humphries from a Nottingham hospital three years ago would have led to a radical overhaul of security at matermity wards.

Yet the ease with which a three-hour-old baby was taken from Basildon General Hospital yesterday demonstrated how powerless hospital authorities still are when faced with a determined snatcher. After the Humphries case, the Government issued guidance to NHS hospitals. It proposed tags to identify babies, identity badging for legitimate staff, closed-circuit cameras and controls on access to hospital premises.

But it stopped short of being prescriptive: hospitals were allowed to decide which security measures fitted their cir-

The Basildon hospital has closed-circuit television, staff are issued with badges and internal doors have security locks. But tags can fall off babies' arms, security cameras cannot cover every corner of hospital corridors and identity badges can be forged. Other hospitals have gone further. St Thomas's, in London, has guards outside maternity wards checking ID cards and signing visitors in and

even safe in a maternity ward. She was two days old when her father unwittingly handed her to a baby-snatcher posing as a health visitor at St Thomas's. When her mother, Dawn, 20, appeared on television weeping and shaking, thousands of viewers wrote or phoned in offering

It was a fortnight before the kidnapper. Janet Griffiths, a weeks in a psychiatric hospital nurse, was spotted in the after admitting the offence.



Reunited: Dawn Griffiths with baby Alexandra, who was snatched from St Thomas's Hospital in January 1990 Photograph: David Rose

Cotswold village of Burford. She had taken Alexandra in an attempt to prevent her married lover dumping her.

Ms Griffiths was sent for It was the case of Alexandra treatment in a mental hospital Griffiths seven years ago which and was released five months stunned the nation into the re- later. Shocking though it was, fade into history as a one-off action by a disturbed woman.

It was not until four years later, when five-hour-old Abbie Humphries was snatched from the Queen Elizabeth Medical Centre, Nottingham, that memories of Alexandra came flooding back. The baby was taken by Julie Kelley, 24, who lived near the Humphries. She spent six

parents, Karen and Roger, appealed for their baby's return. calls were made for security measures in maternity wards.

Since then some hospitals have introduced baby-tagging systems and closed-circuit telealisation that babies were not the incident was allowed to vision. But despite the notoriety of these two cases. baby-snatching is a long-stand-

ing problem in this country. The Portia Trust, which tries to help counsel women driven to snatch babies, was set up in 1970. Ken Norman, the trust's

security would not stop baby- to three years in prison.

Over 15 days, while Abbie's snatches by desperate, psychologically disturbed women. "If you made hospitals into fortresses, babies would be taken from prams in the street."

Within nine months of Ab-Lydia Owens was snatched by a bogus visitor from Glan Clwyd Hospital in Bodelwyddan, Wales. The baby was missing for 20 hours. By the time the culprit, Susan Brooke, 39, a grandmother, appeared in court in June 1995, public sympathy for baby-snatching women had chairman, said that at one time evaporated. Whereas previous it was dealing with up to 40 cas- offenders escaped with relaes a year, although the rate has tively light sentences Brooke was branded cruel and wicked Mr Norman said improving by the judge who sentenced her

THE ABDUCTOR'S PROFILE

The typical baby thief will go 'window shopping' in local hospitals to look for the weakest security, Jeremy Lourance, Health Editor, looks at why women become so desperate that they snatch babies from hospitals.

Hospitals can deter abductors but they cannot keep them out altogether. John Rabun, of the US National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, who has visited Britain to advise hospital managers on security, said that although a determined abductor would evade any security cordon, the task was to make it as difficult as possible.

The typical abductor was a woman who might have miscarried and appeared pregnant. She was often not living with her partner and had planned the baby "to get him . back". When she miscarried she went in search of another baby.

British experts stressed that the cases were extremely rare. Ambony Black, former head of the psychology unit at Broadmoor hospital, said the abdactors, who were always women, tended to be people who had been let down, usually by a man, or suffered a set-back such as a miscarriage or a failure to conceive.

"The cases tend to figure around the break-up of a relationship or a loss of some kind. The woman may even be deluded that she has a baby. She may go through a phantom pregnancy. Some women pad themselves out to please a partner."

He said the abductors tended to be sensitive, vulnerable people who had had unhappy experiences which involved being let down or deserted.

"Ordinary people will cope with a lot of distress. They grin and bear it or try for adoption or for infertility treatment, depending on their circumstances. These women invariably turn out to have had a chequered life history and the break-up or

the miscarriage is the latest in a succession of opelaughts, insults and mishaps."

The upside was that because the babies were wanted they tended to be well looked after, "They treat them as their own. If a couple had snatched the baby one would worry that the motive was a bit more ma-

Alice Lovell, psychologist at South Bank University, London, and an expert on the effects of miscarriage, said that the idea that women who lost a baby might think of taking someone else's was a myth. "These women want their own baby. There is no evidence that miscarriage leads to abduction. To compound the loss these women suffer by assuming they might resort to abduction is very hurtful."

In the US, 170 infants have been abducted since 1983, nine so far this year. Ten are still missing. Cathy Nahirny, of the US Center for Missing and Exploited Children said yesterday: "The recovery rate is very good. The babies are very rarely harmed. The women who take them raise them as

She said when a new born baby was taken it was possible the woman would have faked a pregnancy keeping her partner. family and friends in the dark.

She said although there was no criminal intent they lived their lives by lying and deceit. They are incredibly convincing con-

In one case in the US, a woman whose marriage to a soldier was going through a rocky patch told him she was pregnant. She then convinced him that there was a tradition in her family going back generations that the pregnant couple did not have sex or sleep together during the pregnancy. Her husband, anxious not to upset her, accepted

During her "pregnancy" she stuffed padding in her clothes and when she was 'due" and her husband was away for a few days, she applied for a babysitting position

Ruin for lawyer who lied to save police boyfriend from drink-drive charge

A disgraced solicitor wept at the Old Bailey yesterday as she was iailed for three months for perverting the course of justice to protect her policeman boyfriend from a drink-drive charge. Jojo Moyes reports

Penelope Schofield wrecked her career in a "moment of madness" when she claimed she was behind the wheel of the drunken detective's car when he drove home after a CID Christmas party. But she had left earlier by taxi, after having a row with Detective Constable Nigel Phillips because he was canoodling with another woman at the porty.

The lawyer, from Hampshire, was told by the Recorder of London, Sir Lawrence Verney: "I have to bear in mind not only your personal position, but also the concern of the public that a practising solicitor had on this occasion practised deception and deception against the public justice."

Phillips. 31. also from



Schofield: 'Moment of madness' Photograph: James Horton

Hampshire, was well over the over the limit. The judge said drink-drive limit when he left the party on 6 December last year. On his way to the cottage he shared with Schofield he hit a kerb, had a puncture and drove to the police station where he was based. There he was breathalysed and arrested. makes it even more serious."

But after emotional calls from the station. Schofield rang to say she had driven most of the way home. Phillips was jailed for 16 months for perverting the course of justice and for driving while three times

the couple's behaviour had "ruined two promising careers in which each of you had given good service to the public over a long period. That those who offend are deeply involved in the process of public justice

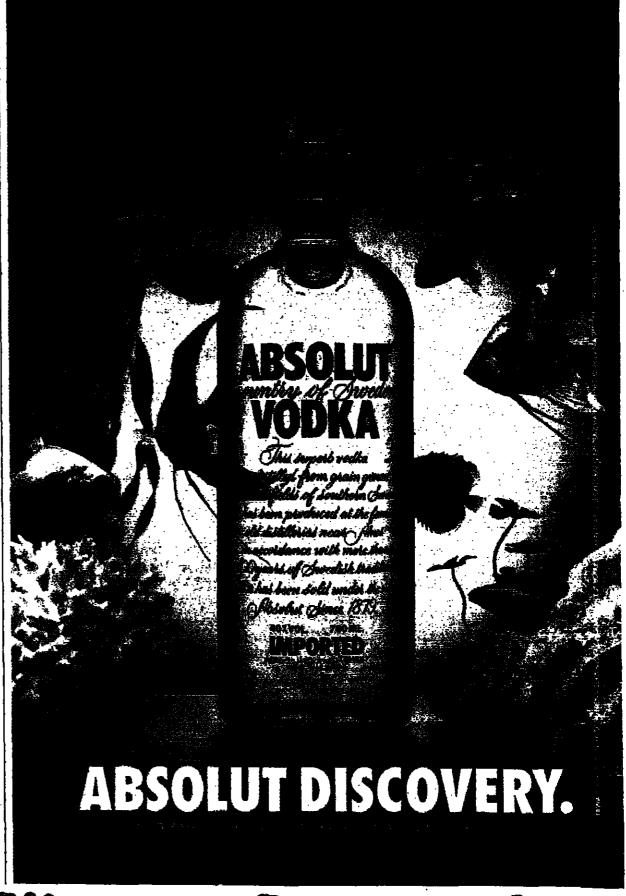
Phillips was near to tears as he stood to one side to allow the sobbing Schofield. 35, to be taken to the cells. He had involved the woman he loved in a "desperate attempt to keep the jobhe loved", said his counsel,

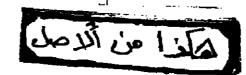
Michael Egan. Phillips's shame over ruining their lives led him to try to commit suicide last March, the court was told.

Mr Egan said the trial had brought home to Phillips "the full enormity and gravity" of his conduct. "He has destroyed a promising career. He has destroyed the relationship with the voman he sincerely loved." Richard Lissack QC, de-

fending Schofield, said it was hard to think of a greater shame for someone in the legal profession. As a lawyer she was confident, successful and highly regarded. But as a woman she was vulnerable, under confident and was always blaming herself as the result of an earlier, 13-year physically abusive relationship with another man.

When Schofield confessed to police, she said: "In a moment of madness, when I agreed to say that I had driven, I lost everything ... I did it for Nigel, out of stupidity, without thinking of the consequences." Now she had "lost her name, position in the community and career which is, or was, her life. She almost certainly will be struck off by the Law Society.





Police call for laser-pen study

Police superintendents yesterday called for research into the effects of laser pens, amid growing concern about their use.

At a meeting of the national executive of the Police Superintendents' Association in London, half the forces said they had received reports of pens being used to temporarily blind or distract people.

The association vice-chairman, Peter Gammon, said not enough was known about their ability to cause damage or distress to people.

"The issue is: are they being used by people to inflict distress or harm on other people? ... We think there should be a definitive examination of laser pens. I think there are sufficient laws to deal with someone who uses a laser pen. The issue is whether they should be freely available." Incidents reported include attasks on police officers, drivers, racehorses and the footballer Vinnie Jones.

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Businessman puts a high price on walking

Walkers are about to be invited to join an association offering healthier living and charitable goals. But it is likely to be the most expensive organisation of its type in Britain. As Stephen Goodwin discovers, serious questions need to be asked about the Serious Walkers Association.

Advertisements have been planned for outdoor magazines urging those who enjoy the beauty and freedom of the countryside" to join the Serious Walkers Association. The title sounds like a leg-pull, conjuring up images of long-faced.

SAVE ON HOME ENTERTAINMENT

along and worrying about the state of the hedgerows. But it is not.

The advertisements were placed on behalf of the SWA whose founder, Stephen Drury, a 44-year-old businessman living in Claverdon. Warwickshire, has a history of VAT fraud and bankruptcy. His aim is for the SWA to be a national body with 60,000 members by

Even before an SWA boot has taken its first public step, the association is declaring: "Every year we donate funds to many major charities". Readers are offered the prospect of "healthier living through regular walking", challenge walks and support with planning a walk

anywhere in the countryside. No membership fee is mentioned in the advertisement but walkers who request further information may be in for a shock. Individual membership is provisionally set at £36 and life membership at £540. Even the young persons' rate (for 16- to 21-year-olds) could be £18.

By comparison, full memhership of the Ramblers' Association, a charity, costs £16 a year and for local walking groups subscriptions can be as low as 50p. One club official said Mr Drury may believe that walkers are an "untapped market". If they could spend £200 on a waterproof jacket why not been granted legal aid. £36 to join the SWA?

According to a draft business plan of August 1997, by the end of 2002, the SWA wants to be grossing £2m a year and raising a further £1m a year for *good

cagouled figures marching "bold", Mr Drury said. The SWA would be offering members a lot more than existing clubs and would not be joining the access campaign.

We are not about taking money off people for no return," he told The Independent. "We are in the business of letting people join an alternative to the Ramblers' which is much better organised and dedicated to good causes." Having founded the SWA, he said he would be promoting the charitable side. "I will be having nothing to do with the money," he insisted. Start-up money for the association was coming from a very well-heeled benefactor".

Listing his own accomplishments as a walker, Mr Drury said there was no fitter 44year-old. He had walked the Pennine Way, Land's End to John o' Groats, and across 1,000 miles of America.

But Mr Drury is also familiar with the courts. He served a prison sentence this year for threatening behaviour towards a woman after their relationship ended, and in 1995 was sentenced to three months in jail for a £46,000 VAT fraud. He was ordered to pay the £7,000 costs of the VAT case and to repay the sum defrauded.

A civil action is being brought against Mr Drury for rent arrears on his former home at Knowle, near Solihull. He has

Two magazines were planning to publish the SWA advertisement in January issues - The Great Outdoors and Country Walking, but TGO confirmed it had withheld the advertisement causes". The objectives were to make "further inquiries".

Jailed peer fails to have term reduced after assault

Lord Brocket, the disgraced peer, failed yesterday in a bid to have his five-year sentence for a £4.2m insurance fraud reduced when three judges dismissed his appeal.

The Vice President of the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Rose, said the sentence was "not out of line" with other fraud jail terms and he could not intervene over disputes between prisoners in fail as there were other remedies available

The appeal had been hailed as a test case over whether jail terms should be reduced for inmates assaulted in prison. The Court of Appeal last month granted him leave to appeal after hearing the peer was knifed and violently assaulted

Lord Brocket, 45, a sporting friend of the Prince of Wales. has been in jail for 20 months and now faces a release date in August next year at the earliest.

Steven Barker, his solicitor, said after the hearing on his way to the cells to visit the peer: "We are very disappointed. Lord Brocket had his hopes up high."

Asked if Lord Brocket would apply for compassionate early release he said: "It is too early to say what will happen." Lord Brocket was jailed at Luton Crown Court in February last year after admitting that he arranged to have four classic Italian sports cars "stolen" in a bogus raid on the family home. Brocket Hall, his 5,000 acre estate in Hertfordshire.

Death gully revisited

A former soldier is returning to the scene of an expedition which came close to a disaster in which five of his colleagues nearly died. Rich Mayfield will set off in a 15-strong team next March on a new expedition to Low's Gully in the jungles of Borneo.

Their target is to complete the first ever descent of the gully - also known as the Place of the Dead - a 10-mile stretch of granite cliffs, massive waterfalls and thick vegetation. In 1994, a 10-man expedition led by Lieutenant-Colonel

Robert Neill should have taken 10 days on an army exercise in the area, but two officers and three soldiers were not plucked from the gully until almost a month after they set off. They were on the brink of starvation. Their five colleagues had escaped in two separate groups days earlier. An army board of inquiry later accused Lt Col Neill of be-

ing "over ambitious" and criticised decisions made by his deputy. Major Ron Foster. No disciplinary was taken against them. Mr Mayfield, 29, said he was optimistic the 1998 team would he more successful than the previous expedition. Asked why he wanted to return to Low's Gully, he said: "I don't like failing. When I fail I go away, become more capable and try again."

Olive oil fails taste test

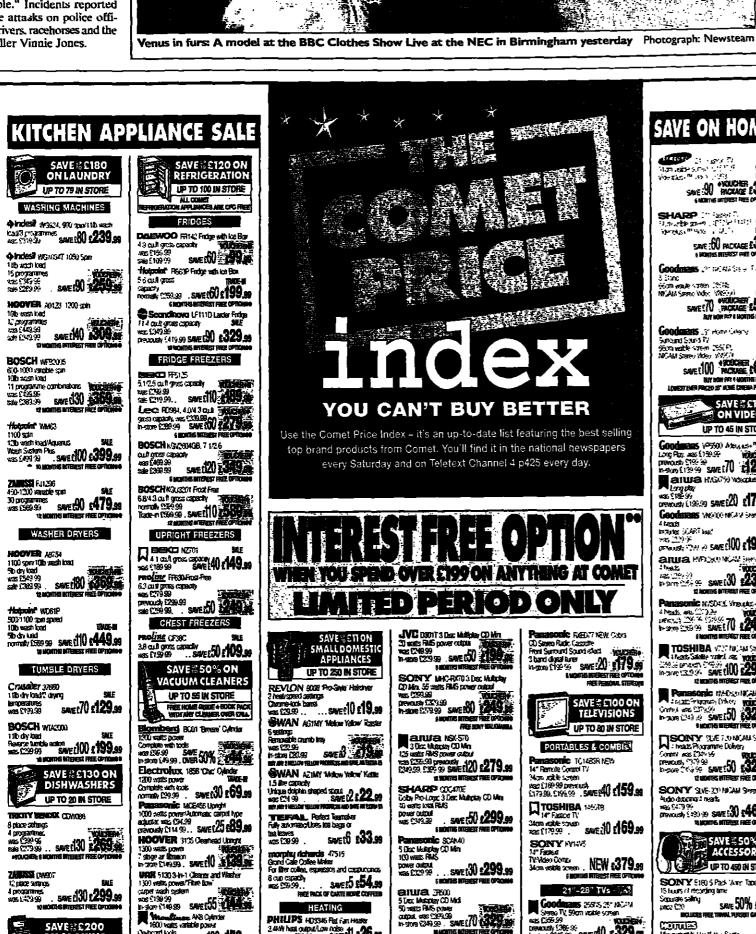
The Sainsbury supermarket chain is pulling bottles of Italian Extra Virgin Olive Oil off its shelves after it was revealed it contained oil from Greek and Spanish olives. Although blended in Italy, and made up mostly of Ital-

ian olives, the store accepted that the label gave the wrong impression about its contents. The BBC programme Weekend Watchdog said the error showed up during a taste test with a chef for the show which was transmitted last night. Sainsbury said: "We can assure customers that a full and

thorough review has been undertaken of all products within the olive oil range and no other products are affected."

Vasectomy claim fails

A couple whose marriage collapsed under the strain of caring for twins born after the husband's vasectomy yesterday lost their High Court action for damages against the doctor who carried out the operation. Deputy Judge Mark Strachan OC, who heard that Andrew and Louise Fulleylove already had three children when Mr Fulleylove was referred by the family planning clinic to Dr Michael Duggan in 1991, said it was a sad case, but ruled that Dr Duggan, from Stevenage Hertfordshire, had properly carried out the operation.





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Al Sharpton: 'This is a vendetta against those who challenged a family not used to being questioned'

Echoes of 'Bonfire of the Vanities' in court fury

The dilapidated courtroom in Poughkeepsie, upstate New York, has never seen a case like it — yelling lawyers, spectators cursing "white justice" and a judge struggling to gain control. It verges on comedy, but, as David Usbame saw from the gallery, it cuts to the heart of America's black-white divide.

The Pagones defamation trial under way in Poughkeepsie, two hours north of New York City, is emerging as the Christmas pantomime to beat all others. The story is about a black woman named Tawana Brawley and about truth. Top of the bill: the Rev Al Sharpton.

There is scant joy in it, however. Its playing-out in this creaking chamber of the State Supreme Court is resurrecting one of the country's darkest and, arguably, most disgraceful episodes of racial confrontation.

For many blacks, it is a chance to advertise what they know about American justice: that, for them, it does not exist. For as many whites, it promises final reckoning for Mr Sharpton, the New York City street-preacher and politician widely thought to have been an inspiration for the scurrilous figure of Rev Reggie Bacon in Tom Wolfe's late-80s novel The Bonfire of the Vanities.

It began 10 years ago, on 28 November 1987, when Tawana Brawley, then 15 years old, was found in a dustbin liner by the side of the road near here, her hair matted with faeces and racial slurs scrawled on her body. She claimed she had been kidnapped by six white men, and raped and sodomised.

In March 1988, Mr Sharpton and two black lawyers, Alton Maddox and Vernon Mason, went before the press to name the man they said was the leader of the gang. He was Steven Pagones, a white assistant district attorney of this county and the son of a local judge. Other prominent blacks, including the comedian Bill Cosby and former world boxing champion Mike Tyson, associated themselves with campaign.

Challenged by sceptical reporters on that day to provide some proof, Mr Sharpton laid down the gauntlet to Mr Pagones: "If we are lying, then sue us ... sue us – sue us. Sue us right now!"



Tawana Brawley: Crowd cheered when she insisted her story was true

Ten years on, that is what Mr Pagones is doing. With a defamation lawsuit asking for damages totalling \$395m (£243m), Mr Pagones, who is now 36, is setting out to prove that the trio maliciously set out

The battle lines are already drawn. The three defendants will contend that the day before their press conference, Ms Brawley had seen a photograph of Mr Pagones in a Poughkeepsie newspaper and identified him to them. They decided to take action, they will argue, because they believed a white-man cover-up was being perpetrated to protect Mr Pagones from prosecution.

Mr Pagones and his lawyer, William Stanton, will try to show that the three made no effort to seek corroboration of her claim and, therefore, that they acted in reckless pursuit of their own self-aggrandisement. An associate of Mr Sharpton later said the minister had told his colleagues that he had taken on the case to make himself the "biggest nigger in New York".

Mr Stanton faces a difficult challenge. However, he has some powerful ammunition. A report from a grand jury empanelled in 1988 to investigate the claims concludes that Ms Brawley was guilty of perpetrating a hoax and that Mr Pagones was innocent. Indeed, there was never a

trial, because no formal charges were filed.

Reminding the jury this week of Mr
Sharpton's challenge to Mr Pagones to sue.

Mr Stanton declared in his opening argument: "Well, here we are. You're going to decide, we called their bluff. The
Brawleys hatched this story. These
defendants were the screenwriters."

As if to ensure that passions were inflamed to the maximum, Ms Brawley herself broke 10 years of silence about the case by appearing before 600 supporters, almost all black, in a Brooklyn church last Tuesday. To loud cheers and chanting, she stuck by her story, proclaiming: "I'm not a liar, I'm not crazy." So far, she has never testified to it on the Bible. Whether she will appear during these proceedings is one of their greatest elements of suspense.

Judge Barrett Hickman, meanwhile, must keep the trial on the rails. Sharpton supporters arrive daily by bus from the city and are not watching quietly. Yells of "white justice" shook the court when Judge Hickman revealed he had a letter showing Mr Sharpton and the two lawyers had been invited to testify before the grand jury. They never did. As Judge Hickman stalked from the court, the defence lawyers, enraged about the letter, screamed after him, "Judge! Judge!"

A finding for Mr Pagones could spell disaster for Mr Sharpton. He has toned down his rhetoric and is trying to enter the political mainstream. Last month, he won a respectable showing in the New York mayoral race and next year he is expected to run for Congress. Talking to The Independent, he refused point blank to express regret for his words 10 years ago, or back down from his original claims. "This is a vendetta against those of us who had the audacity to challenge a family that is not used to being questioned," he insisted calmly.

Pushed further on what might have motivated Mr Pagones to reopen the wounds that cut so deeply into both the black and white communities, Mr Sharpton declined speculation: "I get sued when I speak in America. I get sued when I think in America. Please, please don't make me think."

IT'S BIG, IT'S RED, IT'S RUDE (in parts) ... IT'S ON-LINE!

(1st - 31st December 1997)

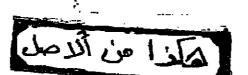


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Frank Barnaby has spent a lifetime studying both military and civilian nuclear projects all around the world, and right now he has special concerns for the people of Cardiff.

The nuclear physicist and former director of SIPRI, the famous international peace institute in Sweden, believes local people may be at risk of passing on serious medical condi-

tions to future generations because their water supply contains tiny traces of the radioactive material, Tritium.

Nuclear waste timebomb

The radionuclide is used by local company Nycomed Amersham in the manufacture of equipment used by drug companies to develop new products and by medical researchers for studying the activity of cells.

There is some indication now that Tritium can induce genomic instability. In other words, the radiation can damage the chromosome but the damage may not show up," said Professor Barnaby.

"It now appears that the damage can come in the second, third or even fourth generations." The damage to cells could lead to cancer and other conditions, including Alzheimer's and motor neurone disease. Envi-

ronmentalists have dubbed Cardiff the Tritium capital of

Trevor Jones, a Cardiffbased researcher in radioactive isotopes and radiation, said: "Because the energy level of Tritium is so low it is very difficult to measure. In the US it has taken two generations before the effects of Tritium have manifested themselves in cancers or central nervous disorders."

The epidemiologist Professor Alice Stewart, from Birmingham University, is also concerned after making a study on the long-term health effects of those exposed to the Hiroshima bomb. She said that her latest research, to be published next year, will show that the dangers from low-level ionising radiation are 10 times greater than previously thought. The scien-

tists were all present at a conference in Cardiff yesterday called to discuss possible dangers to the local population from lowlevel radiation.

The conference was called after it was revealed that Amersham made an application to store 285 drums of radioactive waste on the site.

The company said yesterday that the waste was merely the standard laboratory equipment worn and used by scientists when handling minute quantities of the radionuclides Tritium and Carbon 14.

Spokesman Alan Huw Smith said Tritium was stored in steel jars within steel containers. Although, as a hydrogen, tiny amounts of tritium escaped into the air, the company operated well within agreed safety levels.



Season of hope: A homeless man in Kensington, west London, who may be able to find shelter in temporary accommodation which has been arranged by the homeles charity, Shelter, over the Christmas period Photograph: Andrew Buurman

BBC banks on a

All stores open 8.30am until late today.

(Check with your local store for Sunday opening times.)

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comic Christmas

Comedy heads the festive fare cludes an adaptation of Wilkie in BBC TV's £42m Christmas season, with a "triple whammy" of special episodes of One Foot In The Grave, Men Behaving Enders. Badly and They Think It's All Over one after each other.

Other Christmas Day treats and the actor Simon Callow unveiled today are the Holly-wood films The Flintstones, star-Dickens in A Christmas Dickens. ring John Goodman, and The Mask. starring Jim Carrey.

Boxing Day brings The Vicar Of Dibley and Before They Were Famous II, while Teletubbyland takes on a festive air tribute to the banana and the for five weekday episodes.

The ubiquitous Spice Girls pop up twice on BBC1 over the umphs in the Christmas ratings Christmas season - once on Live as it pumps resources into a peand Kicking and again as hosts of Top Of The Pops. Lily Savage, Mrs Merton, Shirley Bassey and Bette Midler are among the stars featured in programmes over the period.

Peter Salmon, controller of BBC1, said: "BBC1 has an ir- at this year's Christmas feast resistible line-up of comedy

and entertainment."

Court defeat

for Zito killer

The schizophrenic killer of the musician Jonathan Zito was yesterday barred by the Court of Appeal from bringing a damages action against a London health authority over its

alleged failure to care for him. Three judges allowed an appeal by Camden and Islington health authority against a High Court decision that Christopher

Clunis was entitled to sue. The ruling also blocks a damages action brought by Zito's widow, Jayne, against Clunis with a view to his including her compensation in his

claim against the authority. Lawyers for Clunis may still petition the law lords for leave to appeal against the decision. Clunis was detained indefinitely in Rampton hospital in

1993 after admitting stabbing Zito to death at Finsbury Park Tube station. Lord Justice Beldam, sitting with Lord Justice Potter and Mrs Justice Bracewell, held that it would not be fair or reasonable to hold the authority li-

able to Clunis for the

consequences of his crime.

adventure, as the animator Nick But Christmas drama in- Park explores new projects.

Collins' Victorian ghost story

The Woman in White, as well as

visits to Ballykissangel and East-

Madame Butterfly is BBC2's

Modern Times' "The Shrine"

to Kensington Palace in the wake of Diana, Princess of

Wales's death and Arena pays

The BBC traditionally tri-

riod when large audiences are

available but advertising pick-

Horses trilogy won record-

no new Wallace and Gromit

breaking audiences.

Last year's Only Fools And

But there is one empty place

ings are slim.

explores the public pilgrimage

Christmas Day opera offering

Inquest on gas death teenager

An inquest opened yesterday on a church-going teenager who had just won a role in an anti-drugs play and who is believed to have died after sniffing lighter gas. Chantelle Bleau, 16, col-

lapsed at a friend's house on Monday after sniffing the gas and died in hospital. She had iust won a role in a play, Deadly Deals, which has been on tour at schools in her home city of Bradford, west Yorkshire. She and her parents, Richard and Pat Bleau, were members of the Abundant Life Church, where she

in the creche. The inquest was opened and adjourned vesterday. Mrs Bleau told a local pa-

sang in the choir and helped

per that she and her husband were told Chantelle had fallen and bumped her head at a friend's house.

She arrived at the hospital as staff were trying to revive Chantelle. Neither she nor her husband knew that Chantelle experimented with

Special needs pupils get £11 m boost for access to schools

The Government yesterday announced a boost of £11m to help mainstream schools become more accessible to special needs children. Estelle Morris, the schools minister, told MPs that on the £4m set aside by the previous administration for the Schools Access Initiative was the most that had ever been spent

on the initiative in any year. The initiative is part of the Government's overall commitsubject of a consultative Green Paper, entitled Excellence for All Children. Ms Morris said: "In our Green Paper ..., the Govannouncing a significant ex-schools".

pansion in the School Access Initiative, to help mainstream schools become more accessible to children with disabilities. We are honouring that commitment. We inherited funding the almost three-fold increase for this initiative running at £4m a year.

That sum would be increased to £11m next year - "the most that has ever been spent on the initiative in any year.

She said all mainstream schools would be eligible for ment to improving special support under the initiative. needs education, which is the which is designed to increase physical access to mainstream schools and which she described as "an important part of our ernment committed itself to children attend mainstream programme to help disabled

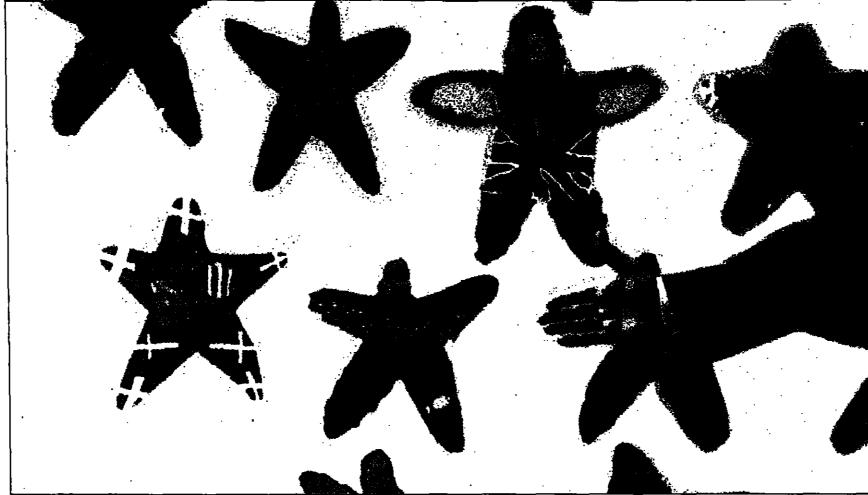
Blair points to a new image for EU presidency

Tony Blair yesterday opened festivities for Britain's forthcoming Presidency of the European Union, unveiling a spanking new logo for the event and vowing to find a European 'Third Way' to the sunlit economic uplands. Rupert Cornwell went along to watch the fun at Waterloo Station.

Hand it to New Labour: they're not ones for the subtle approach. At exactly 11.20am in the modern and dynamic setting of the Channel Tunnel rail terminal, a modern and dynamic Eurostar express glided in to Platform 24, and a modern and dynamic Prime Minister launched Britain's modern and dynamic stewardship of the EU for the first six months of 1998.

True, the specially chartered train had come only from Clapham Junction, not Brussels. for the occasion. But it was decked out in the new logo of 15 different stars, designed and painted by children from each EU member country, and whose image Downing Street and the Foreign Office had been guarding beforehand as tightly as the Trident missile launch codes. And like everything else yesterday, the logo was on message.

The children who produced



Hands on approach: Tony Blair pointing to the new star logo designed and painted by children from the 15 member states of the EU

that works together as a team. with most set-piece Euro- a test for the Government's ortries retain their distinctive with pious generalities. The

said, "And we want a Europe the practical benefit of all." As (and - he might have added - over the six months to 30 June). cessful launch of the single cur-A Europe in which our coun- occasions, the air was thick ganisational skills, given the 50 and probably future, he railed ministerial and summit meetidentities as the children do in British presidency was a test of ings, 150 gatherings of senior the Common Agricultural Pol- tance of the EU enlargement the logo, but work together to British leadership and Europe's EU officials, and 1,500 expert icy. Dutifully, Mr Blair negotiations that begin on 31 tackle common problems for capacity to embrace change working groups it must chair promised to work for a suc- March, and promised new com-

Like Prime Ministers past against the "cost and waste" of again, he stressed the impor-

rency, in which Britain of course will not be taking part. Once

mon action on crime, drugs, and the environment. Tory "indecision, vaciliation and, let's face it, anti-Europeanism" were a

Photograph: Tom Pilston

Most striking perhaps was

thing of the past, he vowed.

Way" for Europe, pitched between outmoded state intervention and unrestrained

laissez-faire capitalism. It would depend on "education not regulation", and on open markets rather than protectionism. The crucial tests would come over completion of the single market, and reform of Europe's over-rigid labour

But Mr Blair will only put flesh on these bones in January. with a speech detailing Britain's plans for the presidency. Yesterday, he devoted scarcely a word to such unpleasantnesses as the row over Britam's exclusion from the single currency inner council, and the ban on beef exports. Britain would be a leader of Europe, he insisted. But he did not say how it would achieve this while shunning the common currency.

But at least there was that logo; 15 cute little stars that looked like multicoloured starfish, painted by 30 cute little children who were guests at

Downing Street yesterday. It looks harmless enough. certainly less risky than the logo marking the last British EU presidency in 1992. That one depicted a lion putting its head into the Euro-flag's circle of stars - only to have it comprehensively bitten off when the pound was driven from the ERM on Black Wednesday.

This time though, it is Italy which may be miffed. Bang in the middle of the stella Italiana sits not an Olivetti, a Fiat, or a Ferrari - but a pizza.

Labour ministers accused of conducting 'government by review'

review" last night as a full list revealed a total of 54 different such exercises launched since I May. A monitoring exercise by the Conservatives, completed yesterday, shows note" of this Government. the extent of the inquiring and investigattaking in all departments, to the small-scale review of silicone breast implants, almost

every aspect of government is involved. The Conservatives claim there is a

words of the Labour leadership. Andrew Cooper, director of political operations for the Tories, said reviews were a "character-

"It's become a habit." he said. "The Goving which is going on across Whitehall. ernment which talks about hard choices From the comprehensive spending review, seems to be extremely adept at punting dent schools, a ceasefire in Northern Ireland, things into reviews rather than taking decisions. This is a party which had 18 years to prepare for government."

power the control of interest rates had been en in weeks, if not days," he said. handed to the Bank of England. Since then there had been, among many other initiatives, the Windfall Tax, referenda on devolution for Scotland and Wales, the abolition of the Assisted Places Scheme in indepena Referendum Bill for London, health action zones and a Crime and Disorder Bill.

"It isn't unreasonable after 18 years that A Downing Street spokesman said there a new government should look at whole arstark contrast between the amount of re- had in fact been plenty of real governing go- eas of policy. Also, some of the big deci-

Ministers were accused of "government by viewing which is going on and the bold ing on. Within days of Labour coming to sions the government has made were tak-

nprehensive spending review; eaucratic burden on teachers

Bureaucratic burden on teachers.
Criteria used in considering licence applications for export of conventional weapons;
The law relating to surrogacy; The law relating to silicone breast implants; Proposed NHS Private Finance Initiative schemes; Breast cancer screening services; London health services; Arrangements for celebrating the milleantum; National Lottery, Film policy; Sport on television; Compulsory Competitive Tendering regulations; Transport policy; The roads programme; Buses; Enforcement of rules on welfare of animals exported live to the Continent; Inoculation as a

substitute for rabies quarantine; Milk
Development Couacil;
International Development policy;
Economic regeneration in Wales;
Proposals for reform of civil litigation and legal aid;

system; the rost Office; Programme to identify technology opportunities: Effectiveness of export promotion programmes; Steps to strengthen democratic control of public water authorities in Scotland; Scotlish Enterpris

partmental public bodies: Child Benefit; Welfare-to-Work (ask-force; Social Exclusion Unit; Family Policy Committee:

rensons; Long-term welfare; Disability benefit: Industrial injuries compensation; Royal Commission on long-term care; Admission charging by national museu Immigration detention policy. The coal industry: Level of Cabinet salaries; Party funding: The handling of the BSE crisis:

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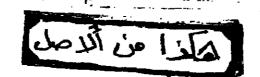
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Blair warns farmers to stay within the law

Farmers were given scant hope of significant extra compensation for පිSE last night as ministers warned that blockades of ports must stop. Fran Abrams watched the developments.

Protesting beef farmers must stay within the law, the Prime Minister said yesterday. But ers from around Europe. he failed to signal any new modey which might help them over the latest crisis.

We fully understand the discoming presidency of the Eu- emerged. ropean Union.

The taxpayer will pay £1.4bn this year in support of the British beef industry and of course we do everything we can to support them. It is essential, however, that the rule of law must be upheld," he said.

But Mr Blair's official spokesman was underlining the Government's reluctance to dig ever-deoper into its pockets.

The Government is keeping in touch with the issues," he said. "But as the Prime Minister made clear... on Wednesday, there is no European pot of gold which we can go to."

connection with the Common Agriculture Policy, £1.9bn had gone to the beef sectors, of which £1.4bn went on BSE-

related spending. The warning came as it emerged that Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, will today urge the Government to tap EU funds to help beef farmers at a meeting in Copenhagen of the liberal party lead-

In Cardiff yesterday, the Secretary of State for Wales, Ron Davies, held a 90-minute meeting with farmers' leaders tress and difficulties of farmers who travelled from Holyhead and we have been working to as- and Fishguard to air their grievsist them." Mr Blair said at the ances. Around 200 farmers and launch at Waterloo station of their wives crowded the steps of the festivities for Britain's forth- the Welsh Office when he

> It also became clear that an order would be laid in Parliament to formalise the ban shortly, and that it would come into force within two weeks.

> The shadow agriculture minister, Michael Jack, said the government should "come clean" over what it planned to do to help the farmers.

"Playing hard and loose with the anxieties of anxious and desperate farmers is irresponsible government," he said.

"The Government must also make clear where the money will come from to fund the pack-

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He added that of the £4bn a rob-Peter-to-pay-Paul exerspent in the UK in 1996-97 in cise. Any compensation package should be to the benefit of the hardest-pressed and not leave other areas out."

Later, a Labour source accused him of "teetering on the edge of condoning violence by strikers".

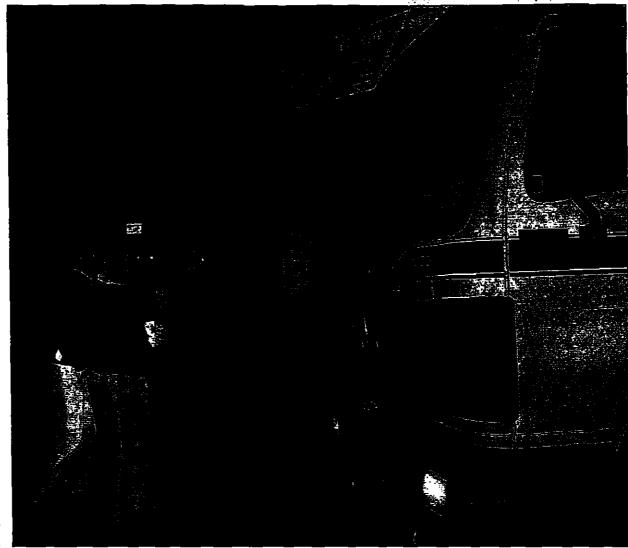
It became clear last night that the options open to the Government on how to compensate farmers were limited. A spokeswoman for the

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food said there were no plans to change the over-30 month scheme despite a statement by a minister that he was unhappy with its operation.

Jeff Rooker, the agriculture minister, said farmers were getting hundreds of pounds for "clapped out old milkers" which used to be worth "a fiver".

The Maff spokeswoman also indicated that a special payment to hill farmers of £60m last year was unlikely to be repeated at the same level. If farmers are to be given the

money they are demanding some have claimed they need almost £1bn - the only source would be Europe. Maff said £980m was available to Britain under a scheme to compensate for the rise in the value of sterling, £340m of which would come from the exchequer. But Europe's contribution would be deducted from payments by



Photograph: Brian Harris

DAIRY FARMS UNDER FIRE

farms were criticised yesters day in a report commit sioned by the Government It said levels of lameness among dairy cattle were "und acceptably high" and called for urgent action to end suffering on farms.

Studies showed an average of 55 per cent of cattle were going lame each year and levels were rising.

Some farmers were accused of not taking the problem seriously - leaving cattle in pain and distress even though lameness led to reduced yields.

The report by the Farm Animal Welfare Council, an Independent body of farming experts, blamed intensive farming methods and poor

Too many animals were being housed in inadequate cubicles or forced to stand in slurry, wet straw or were walked along poor tracks causing foot and leg problems.

The report laid before agriculture ministers said: Lameness is almost always a painful condition and it interferes with accountability to interact fully with her environment, especially her social environment, hence it is a major animal welfare issue. There are many farms where lameness is causing unnecessary pain and distress."



Irish union leaders head for Holyhead to stake their case

Irish farmers' leaders travelled It's a simple question of protesters. For example, neither to Holyhead last night to plead whether or not we wish to see for the blockade to end.

Frank Allen, who represents 30,000 dairy farmers, told Welsh farmers they were aiming at the wrong target: "The solution to your problems lies with the UK Government. We will suffer grievously if your action continues much longer."

Mr Allen, president of the Irish Creamery and Milk Supply Association, accused the British Government of failing to appreciate the crisis in farming and make use of EU compensation funds for the industry.

But as Irish companies and the Road Haulage Association threatened to sue the Britain for loss of business, farmers showed no sign of abandoning

Hodges, said: "It's not a quesdo not have a legitimate dispute. ing too lenient or harsh with pected at Plymouth.

when whole sections of British industry and the economy were effectively held to ransom by anyone with a grievance."

This week's action by farmers was not "helpful" to the association's efforts to secure compensation from the French government for losses incurred during the blockade by French farmers at Calais last year.

The forces policing the farming protests have to deal with competing interests. While their primary duty is to keep the such deals officers are likely to peace, they have to balance the right of businesses to carry on their activity against the freedom of farmers to protest.

Senior police o RHA spokesman, Daniel considerable discretion in carrying out their duties, and this tion of whether farmers do or can lead to claims of either be- last night, with new pickets ex-

North Wales police or Dyfed a return to the dark days of the Powys police have yet arrested Seventies and early Eighties anyone at the Holyhead or Fishguard protests. In contrast there were three arrests - and one charge - after a similar protest at Dover.

Yet the Welsh forces insist that they will do everything necessary - including arrests - to ensure that lorries get through. The defining factor is likely to be the level of agreement, if any, between the lorry drivers, port authorities and the protesting farmers over the nature of the demonstrations. If there are

take more of a back seat. Police in North Wales said they are considering criminal damage charges over the tossby demonstrators at Holyhead.

More protests were planned



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RAF officer guilty of wife's murder in fake car crash

A senior RAF officer was yesterday sentenced to life imprisonment for killing his wife. Kim Sengupta describes how Squadron Leader Nick Tucker's obsessive love for a Serbian interpreter led to murder.

Squadron Leader Nicholas Tucker prided himself on being meticulous and careful, and he planned the "perfect murder" of his wife meticulously and carefully. The prizes he must have felt so near to his grasp were a new life with Dijana Dudukovic, a heautiful woman half his age, and more than £300,000 from his wife's life insurance.

But the elaborate planning that went into staging a car crash which killed 52-year-old Carol Tucker was unravelled by painstaking investigation by detectives who simply refused to accept the Royal Air Force officer's account of an accidental death. Tucker had throttled then drowned his wife

in the river Lark at Lackford, Suffolk, in July 1995 before faking the crash.

Yesterday, Tucker became the most senior officer ever to be convicted of murder outside a war zone. After a 15-day trial, a jury took seven and a half hours to find him guilty on a majority verdict of 10 to 2. Sentencing him to life imprisonment, Mr Justice Gage said; "This was a planned, callous and coolly executed act. The motive for it is that you have become besorted with a young woman interpreter you had met while serving with the [United Nations] forces in Bosnia. This is an appalling crime."

Detectives who arrested Tucker described his arrogance and condescension towards them. Detective Chief Inspector Michael Bier, in charge of the investigation, said: "The Squadron Leader thought he had planned the perfect murder, he was too cocky. He was a deceitful man who had planned the murder of his wife, a woman who was a devoted wife and mother, supportive and loyal."

While carrying out investigations in for-

team discovered that a former boyfriend of Ms Dudukovic had died in a car crash under suspicious circumstances, and she had been interviewed by the local police. However, officers pointed out, that accident had taken place in 1995 before she met Tucker. and there is no suggestion that she had any connection with the murder of Mrs Tucker.

Ms Dudukovic said about the accident: "Yes I was interviewed by the police but it was not my fault. This was a horrible thing to happen to someone close to you." She is now married and living in Switzerland. She did not give evidence in court, and has said she knows "nothing about the murder".

The Tuckers' daughter, Vanessa, gave evidence against her father in court describing how her mother had suspected he was having an affair just a few weeks before she was killed. Her brother, James, has stayed with his father.

After the case Tucker's solicitor. David Shipman, said that his client maintained his innocence and an appeal would be lodged



Police found husband had double motives of sex and money

When Dijana Dudukovic was interviewed in Zurich by British detectives following the murder of Carol Tucker, they made no secret of the fact that they were investigating whether she could

As details emerged about the liaison between Squadron Leader Nicholas Tucker and the daughter of a Serbian army colonel alarm bells began ringing at the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office. They discovered that the Royal Air Force officer had been making inquiries with agencies dealing with refugees and asylum seekers. One fear was that he may have been used, unwittingly, to provide avenues of escape for suspected war criminals.

ily who had decome retu in the former Yugoslavia.

After leaving Bosnia Ms Dudukovic moved into the Geneva home of a United Nations official dealing with refugees, Bertrand du Pasquier. in Zurich. Speaking at her police tried to make me out to Dudukovic, who was working as

knocked unconscious, and did

not know how she had died. At least that was the story that he tearfully told the police. paramedics, doctors, his children Vanessa and James, and his wife's family.

But detectives were sceptical from the start. Tucker told them he had been driving at more than 50mph, but the damage to the car was so slight that accident investigators were convinced it was going no more than 10mph when it struck the riverbed.

The river was no deeper than 3ft, and at points only 18in. Mrs Tucker was known to have a fear of water, but did not appear to have attempted to scramble on to land. A post-mortem examination revealed that she had Tucker told the police that his haemorrhaging in both eyes, ininquiries with the agencies were dicating asphysiation, and there on behalf of Ms Dudukovic's was bruising consistent with finger marks on her chest, and and scratches to the back, left

armpit and left upper arm. As well as money, sex was a motive for murder, according to the police. Sqn Ldr Tucker had volunteered for a six-month She is now married and living posting as an United Nations military adviser in Bosnia where home Ms Dudukovic said: "The he had met 21-year-old Dijana



Nicholas and Carol Tucker on their wedding day

be some kind of a spy, but I do an interpreter. The RAF offinot know anything about that. cer, then 44, was plainly hooked nothing about his wife's death. at his trial that he found Ms The police say he killed his wife because he wanted to be with fascinating to be with, very vi-

dered her so he could live with

me. But that is not true." An MoD source said: ple, the small plump bespecta-Think of the equation - a British officer infatuated with 6ft-tall blonde. According to anthe daughter of a Serbian colonel, knowing that man had links with the senior echelon of hold on the squadron leader the Krajna Serb faction. Inquiries were carried out."

Tucker had become besotted with the beautiful woman half his Dudukovic to get a visa for age but he was also married to a 15-stone wife four years older than himself with whom mar- in Piccadilly, central Loudon. In ital relations had effectively ceased. However, if Carol Tucker died, he would get £136,000 from various life insurance policies. If she died in a car crash the had been a "bit of a disaster" figure would go up to £307.500. On the night of 21 July 1995

that is what happened. Driving home with his wife after dinner it bluntly I couldn't hack it." at the Red Lion, in Icklingham, Smile, Tucker missed a turning and snet some deer on the road. Wife grabbed the steering the and the car plunged into found dead, face down in shallow water. Tucker had been

"I am not a spy and I know on her. He was to tell the court Dudukovic "very flirtatious, me. They are saying he mur- vacious" and, incidentally, "a good interpreter".

They made an unlikely coucled officer and the glamorous, other officer serving there at the time, such was Ms Dudokovic's that military operations began

to be run on her "whim". Tucker arranged for Ms Britain, and in June he spent a week with her in the RAF club court, the officer admitted having a brief affair with Ms Dudukovic but stated that the sexual side of their relationship The two occasions on which they tried to make love had ended in failure. He added: "To put

He claimed that Ms Dudukovic simply became a good friend. But this appears not to tally with "schoolboyish" love letters he sent to her. In one he River Lark Mrs Tucker was had written repeatedly, line by line, "I love you" over six pages. — Kim Sengupta



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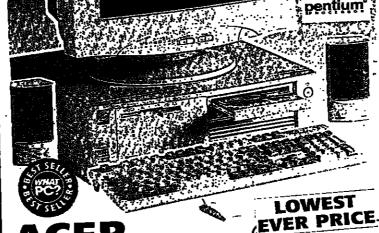
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Taxman prepares to fine 1.5 million as deadline looms

Up to 1.5 million people face fines for failing to complete the new-style tax self-assessment

forms in time. Louise Jury says the stress of filling in the boxes even forced one taxpayer in West Yorkshire to call the Samaritans.

Almost one in five taxpayers Revenue's new forms, only weeks before the 31 January deadline. A MORI survey inreturns from 1.7 million taxpayers, 42 per cent of whom say they have not got around to filling them in.

Another 16 per cent say they are having difficulty and are likely to seek advice. awaiting help. Those failing to return the forms in time face an immediate £100 fine and the Leicester firm, called for the possibility of investigation - £100 fine and interest charges

people out there who need specialist advice and are unsure where to turn for help. Some have had to resort to family and friends, which is not ideal." The ICAEW found that of those who had returned their forms, more than a third had had difficulties completing them and half sought advice.

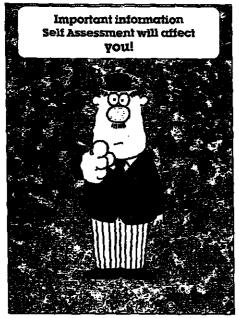
The most common source of advice was a chartered accountant but this still accounted for only 28 per cent. Many turned to family and friends and have not returned the Inland 3 per cent or less went to their employer or to a bank or building society.

The South-west of England dicates the tax man is awaiting had the most taxpayers who completed the form with case, with the Welsh, followed by those in Yorkshire and Humberside, finding it the most difficult. Londoners were most

> Richard Shooter, a selfassessment expert from a



Snowed under: The Inland Revenue is in overdrive, but 20 per cent of taxpayers have still not returned the nev forms, due on 3i January. Those failing to deliver them by then face a £100 fine and the possibility of investigation by the Revenue. Photograph: David Rose

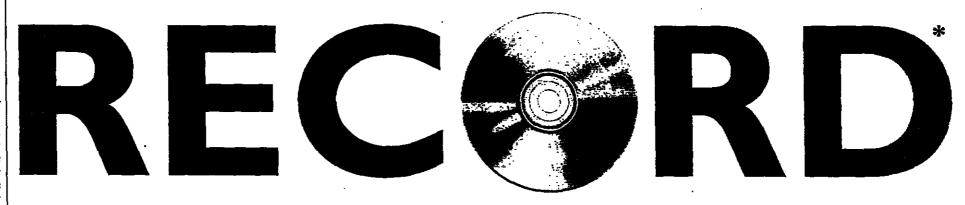


bringing in millions of pounds to be deferred to the end of in penalties. Interest on tax March to give people more owed will be 9.5 per cent from time to sort out problems. But that date and a surcharge of 5 an IR spokesman said: "People per cent will be imposed on anyone who still has not paid by 28 of the January deadline and we February. Anyone failing to are aiming to get every return make their return by 31 July faces a second £100 fine.

Although most people found the forms easy to fill in. problems were evident from 300,000

the Institute of Chartered Ac- that at least 15 per cent of taxcountants in England and Wales payers would be fined at least (ICAEW), which commissioned the survey, said: "This is £150m. The forms went out in a new and complicated tax. April to 9 million high earners, regime, causing massive problems to taxpayers.

will be aware of the importance back next month." They were delighted by many of the survey's findings, he said. A majority of people who had completed their tax forms had returns rejected by the Revenue found them easy to complete. already for "serious errors or Michael Jack, financial secretary to the Treasury, predicted after Anita Monteith, chairman of a pilot study in Leicester in 1996 £100, adding up to nearly people who are self-employed and those with more than one



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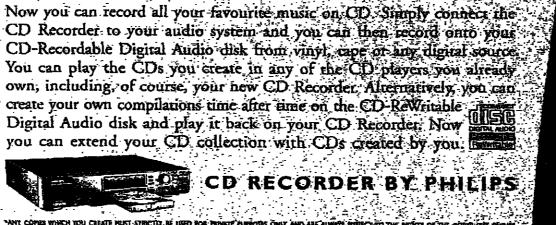
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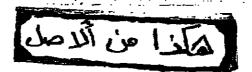
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Kayleigh Ward had only popped where she felt at home in the out for a bag of chips. It was an errand for a woman who shared the hostel in Chester, Cheshire, where the nine-year-old had lived since her family had been—al that at a remote spot by the evicted from their council house. River Dee, he fell upon the girl, for rept arrears.

murdared her, says

Ion Burrell.

But it was on the way back from the chip shop last December that the child bumped into another resident of the hostel, John O'Shaughnessy.

The chips were never delivered. O'Shaughnessy, who today

starts a life sentence for Kayleigh's murder, was described as a "drifter and shifter" who hung around the pubs. He had arrived at the hostel a month earlier with his pregnant girlfriend and her three children from a previous relationship.

When the 31-year-old suggested that Kayleigh took a walk with him by the river bank she went along. Her impoverished upbringing had forced her into a street life city centre, making friends with travellers and older children.

But Mold Crown Court was told during O'Shaughnessy's tribarely four feet tall, and raped her, "I'll tell my mum, I'll tell my mum," she sobbed during the attack. As she walked away in tears. O'Shaughnessy determined that she could not escape, and strangled her with his belt and her tights.

river. Then he took what John Rogers QC, for the prosecutor. described as "carefully calcu-·lated steps" to avoid detection. He told his girlfriend that his clothes had become muddy in a fight and returned his boots to the shop where he had

When Kayleigh's mother became worried that her daughter had not returned home nearly a day later. O'Shaughnessy was one of the most zealous in the search party. He was interviewed several

marked.

times by police and an attempted drug overdose fuelled suspicions. But it was not until late February, two months after the murder, that he finally cracked. The body was found in the riverbed mud on 10 February and O'Shaughnessy made a midnight call to police to say: "I killed Kayleigh Ward."

He threw her body into the rice Kay said O'Shaughnessy should serve a minimum of 30 years. "There is no crime more horrific than the murder of a child. What you did to Kayleigh Ward was unspeakable." he said. He called the killing "depraved, cruei and cowardly".

From the public gallery. bought them, saying they were Kayleigh's mother, Yvonne. screamed at O'Shaughnessy: "I hope you rot in hell." Outside the court she said: "Our lives will never be the same now that Kayleigh has gone forever, and with the knowledge of the terrible circumstances around

Alex Carlile QC, for the defence, said that O'Shaughnessy had been "at risk" when very young but had been nothing more than "a drinker and a bit of a nuisance". He was the father of "several" children from other relationships and there was "never an inkling that he was a child-abuser" before Yesterday, Mr Justice Mau- Kayleigh was murdered.





Kayleigh Ward: Only nine, but at home with street life John O'Shaughnessy: A drifter who hung around pubs

Rape victim's trial ordeal angers judge this right. Another option is to A judge called for a recommend fresh guidance for

change in the law that allows alleged rapists to cross-examine their victims, but support groups fear there are more cases to come. Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent, considers the issue.

Judge Timothy Pontius yesterday jailed for 16 years a rapist who had "mercilessly" ques- at the women's court ordeal.

tioned his two victims in court. The judge said he was not punishing the rapist for the way judge said the rapist, who had he defended himself but added sacked his lawyers, had made reit was "highly regrettable" the law allowed an unrepresented defendant "virtually an unfettered right to personally question his victims in needlessly extended and agonising detail for the obvious purpose of in-

timidation and humiliation". Later Victim Support, which works for witnesses and victims of crime, said the Government needed to act "as a matter of urgency" to reduce the agony of witnesses in future cases.

A spokeswoman said: "This will not be the last case - we fear there are others in the pipeline. The danger is that it will discourage other witnesses from coming forward."

In June the Government set up an inter-departmental review on vulnerable witnesses. Its report is due in the New Year and early legislation or a change in regulations is expected.

Ministers are thought to be considering plans which would protect rape victims from crossexamination by their alleged attackers. At present child witnesses are afforded this protection, and the idea is to extend

judges, giving them powers to prevent cross-examination if they feel a defendant is abusing their right to a fair trial.

At present ministers believe. judges are too constrained by fears that by preventing effective cross-examination defendants would have strong grounds for an appeal.

Following the trial of the 44-year-old rapist last month. the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, said he was "appalled"

Passing sentence at Knightsbridge Crown Court the triai victims, whose courage in reporting the crimes then giving evidence he praised.

He said the sentence reflected the fact the defendant posed a serious risk to the public and that the rape offences last year had involved "protracted and repeated sexual violence of a horrifying degree.

The man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was told that when he is eventually released he will have to register himself with the police under the Sex Offenders Act.

The jury was not told that in the past six years the defendant had been cleared of rape charges on four previous oceasions, twice because his alleged victims were apparently too

terrified to give evidence. One of the victims had to give evidence twice after the first jury was discharged following a heated clash with the judge over his behaviour and attitude towards her. She later asked the judge: "Do I have to put up with this? I have never been so humiliated in my life."

18 years for animal rights firebomber

jailed for a total of 18 years yesterday for waging firebomb terror campaigns against high street stores.

Barry Home, who blitzed the isle of Wight in a £3m night of terror, stood impassively as he was sentenced at Bristol Crown Court, But more than two dozen supporters erupted angrily at the sentence and shouted and banged against glass partitions of the public gallery before being removed by police.

Passing sentence Judge Simon Darwall-Smith told Horne. 45, from Northampton, that pre-sentence reports indicated that he had shown no form of remorse and his intention was to cause the maximum amount of physical and economic damage against his chosen targets. This was urban terrorism for a particular cause by which you put communities in terror."

The judge said he accepted that he did not intend to attack

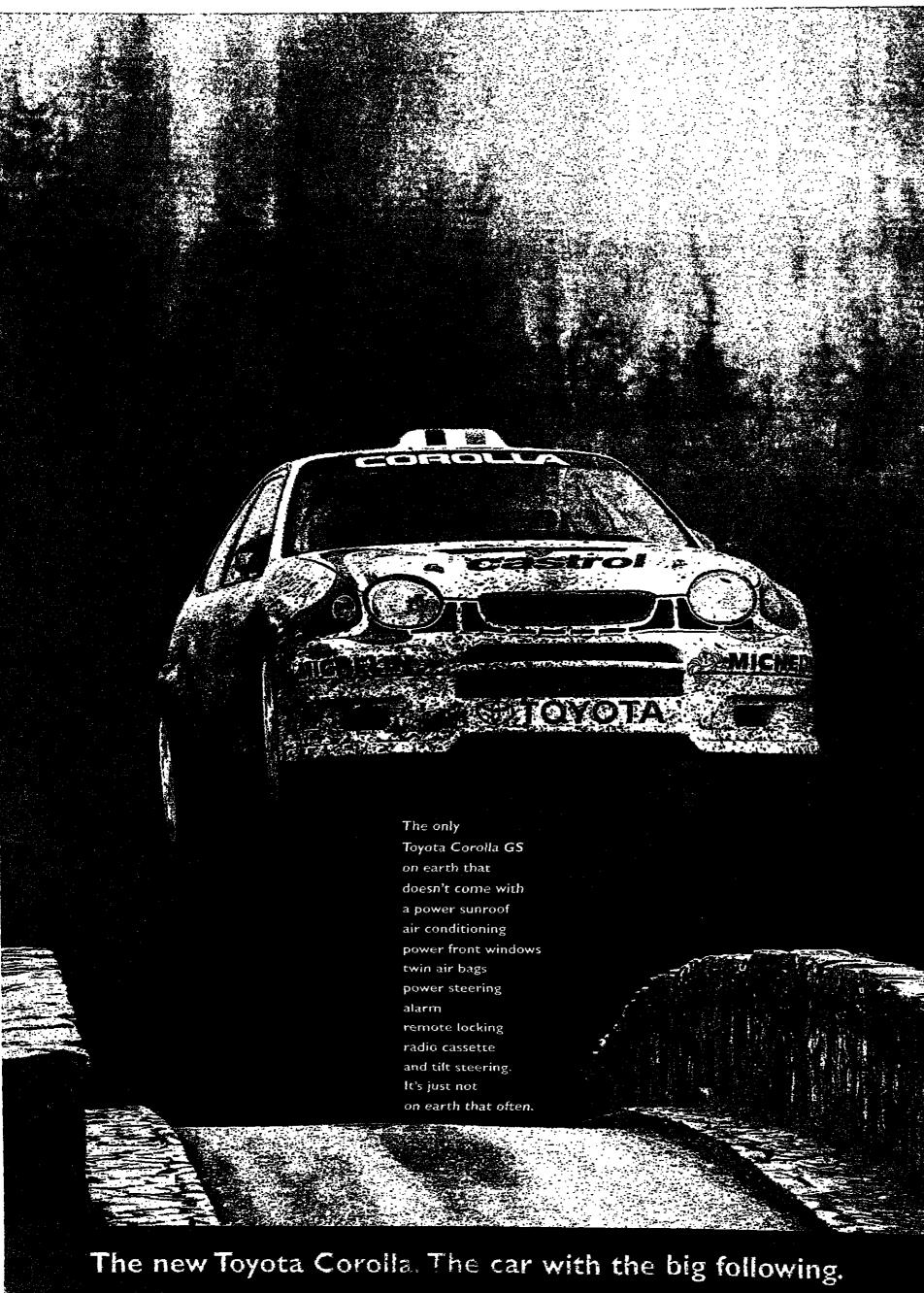
An animal rights activist was burnan life or limb. Horne. who was convicted last month on 12 counts related to his arson campaigns, smiled briefly and gave a thumbs-up salute to supporters in the public gallery

> Police believe that he operated as a lone wolf in his terror campaign, believing that his solo operation was the best strategy to prevent detection. Following his arrest in sum-

NEVER BE BE

as he was led from the dock.

mer last year in Bristol's Broadmead shopping centre he has refused to say anything to investigators. He was detained in July 1996 after he had planted firebomb devices in two city centre stores and had moved on to a third. Undercover officers found four more small incendiary devices in his jacket - all timed to go off after midnight -which they made safe. The firebomb devices matched unexploded devices recovered in August 1994 after four arson incidents on the Isle of Wight.



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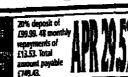
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When animal rights mean human wrongs

Animal welfare campaigners in India want to banish performing animals from the streets. Peter Popham in New Delhi says it will be a long time before the country accepts Western standards of animal welfare.

It was the saddest, shabbiest little political demonstration you could imagine. Yesterday in the business heart of New Delhi, outside the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, several dozen ragged youths sat cross-legged in the road. A few held banners. Maybe half of them were accompanied by the performing animals - monkeys or bears - which enable them to scratch 50p; rather less than £200 a year.

The golden-haired, red-bottomed monkeys, all on chains, foraged for fleas in each other's scalps, or lashed out at enemies with fierce hind legs. One was wearing a pur- Some places in Delhi are practically imple velvet coat embroidered with sequins. The brown bears, muzzled, or with the ropes cows that stand about in the roads. Visithrough their noses that make them respond to orders, lay face down on the tar- way, but locals will tell you it has got much mac as if doped, paws covering their eyes. worse since Mrs Gandhi launched her

on show. They had gathered to campaign structive cattle by municipal authorities. for the right to continue plying their trade. merisingly archaic Indian cityscape, and and carrying off the manuscript.

all equally out of tune with modern ideas of animal welfare, let alone animal rights.

The animal boys have their champions, too. The small gathering outside the bank had spun off from a larger demonstration outside the Presidential Palace, demanding the right to save themselves from starvation. It is the latest initiative in a campaign that has been running for 10 years, and claims the support of 100,000 people.

How do they respond to the argument that treating animals like this is intolerably cruel? Direndra Pratap, one of the organisers of the demonstration, said: "This is just propaganda put out by westernised environmentalists. So many goats and other animals are killed in the country.

"If they offered some alternative way for the handlers to make a living it would a living of 20 or 30 rupees a day, or around be different, but they don't. Without this work, the boys will starve."

Importing western standards of animal welfare to India is undoubtedly treacherous, because the context is so different. passable to traffic because of the herds of tors may assume it has always been this For once, the boys and bears were not campaign against the slaughter of ob-

So at the Presidential Palace yesterday For years, the Society for the Prevention the boys and beasts were in the midst of of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), chaired by what has become a monkey playground: Maneka Gandhi, widow of Sanjay, Indi- Lutyens's heroic architecture is now a vast ra Gandhi's older son, has been fighting climbing frame for wild monkeys. They to outlaw the barbaric treatment of ani-mals, of which dancing bears and pranc-fairs, tearing up files. The Booker Prizeing monkeys are vivid examples. Also on winning novelist Arundathi Roy lives in the list is the mistreatment of elephants the area. While she was finishing The God for carnival purposes and the charming of of Small Things she says she dreaded the pythons and cobras - all a part of the mes- monkeys coming in through her window

CONGRESS ENDS UNHAPPY ARRANGEMENT

The ungainty structure of India's United munalist" Hindu Bhartiya Janta Party Front government, composed of 14 mutually noxious parties and with the Con- 161 seats out of 543, from taking power. gress Party propping it up from outside like a flying buttress, finally fell apart on py arrangement. Sitaram Kesri, Con-Thursday when President Narayanan dis- gress's 77-year-old leader, dispatched the solved the 11th Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament). A general election will be Gowda, after 11 months. Mr Deve Gowheld between the third week of February da's successor, Inder Kumar Gujral, once and the first week of March.

The end came, predictably, when Congress withdrew its support. India's oldest months. Hamstrung by his government's party and the architect of independence conflicting urges, he has spent much of that had been barred from participation in the time parading his distinguished whiskers ruling coalition by left-wing parties; it had around the world's capitals. ient its support solely to block the "com-

(BJP), the largest force in parliament with

But for Congress this was never a hapcoalition's first prime minister. H D Deve a protegé of Nehru and a successful foreign minister, has managed a mere eight



Bear necessities: Those who work as handlers of performing animals say they will starve if welfare campaigners win Photograph: Mary Ellen Mark. From 'India - A Celebration of Independence', published by Aperture

Mugabe rethinks farms seizure

for hea The Zimbahwean government will revise a list of 1,503 farms, mainly owned by white commercial farmers, that it had earmarked for seizure in a peasant resettlement programme. The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation said the list published on 28 November was "full of mistakes and farms that should not have been designated". The decision was reached at a meeting of the central committee of President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF party "after several provincial governors made representations that the list did not represent their submissions." - Reuters, Harare

Israel snubs Europe

The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, said it was committed to peace with the Palestinians but excluded a big role for Europe in the process. Mr Netanyahu, visiting France, met his counterpart. Lionel Jospin, and the US Secretary of State. Madeleine Albright. He said he told Mr Jospin of a proposal for a period "in which the Palestinians would be able to discharge their obligations, especially in ... security ... to assure us that any territory that is handed over will not become a base for additional terrorism." France has been prominent among nations pressing for a greater role for Europe in moving the peace process forward.

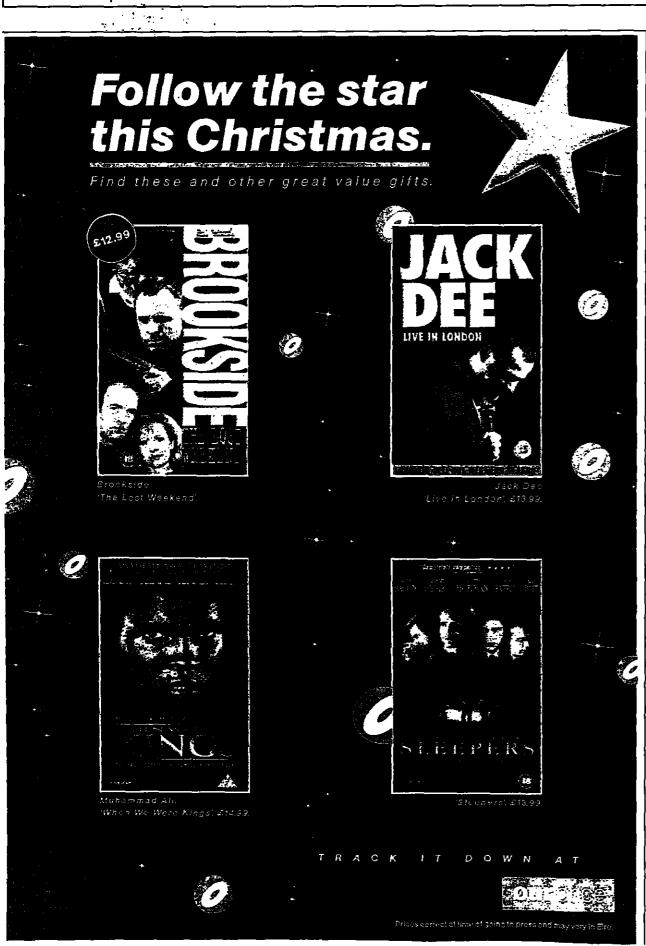
Basque violence

A politician's bodyguard was shot and a car-bomb exploded in San Sebastian in attacks authorities blamed on the Basque Eta group. The violence erupted as 23 leaders of Herri Batasuna, Eta's political wing, were due to be arrested to begin serving sevenyear sentences imposed on Monday for collaborating with the separatist guerrillas. Police said the shooting victim. Jose Maria Lobato, a bodyguard for a San Sebastian city councillor of Spain's ruling Popular Party, was in serious condition.

- Reuters, San Sebastian

Boris to the rescue

Russia's lower house of parliament approved the 1998 draft budget in its first reading minutes after a dramatic intervention by President Boris Yeltsin. The outcome was thrown into doubt after the biggest parliamentary group, the Communists, said they would vote against. The government views the budget as vital to help craft a recovery in 1998 after years of economic depression in post-Soviet Russia and recent world market turmoil. — Reuters, Moscow





be rethinks 'Winnie, the arch-manipulator, reduced South Africa's time for healing to little more than a cheap gameshow

South Africa and the world hoped Desmond Tutu's commission would reach the truth about Winnie Mandela engineered an act of sugary theatre.

In a decade of reporting, no single moment has made me as a furious as the plastic "recon-tremely ugly picture of Mrs.

The embrace between the and the liberation movement. women will be notched up as an eternal shame to the Truth and periment in nation-building it is board to the presidency. currently spearheading.

That Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the TRC chairman, actually halted crucial cross-examination of Mrs Mandela over and surely only racist whites her alleged involvement in were intended to be called to ac-Stompic's murder for the fake count by the TRC. event to take place still seems unbelievable.

The truth and reconciliation theory runs something like this. South Africans are bitterly divided by their racist past. Whites, in general, lived safe and comfortable lives. ignorant or indifferent to the brutal injustice meted out to blacks. Through the TRC it is hoped a new and healthy nation can be built by confronting South Africans with the truth about their past. Only through truth, the theory goes, is forgiveness and reconciliation possible.

South Africa's attempts to heal itself are slow, arduous and painful, with no guarantee of success. The

watched by a world in which

for dealing with it few. That is what makes Thursbeing used, or Mrs Mandela, for man rights abuses are all black. have had as much as a sniff of

using it.

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<u>4</u>

rious assaults.

It became obvious during the hearings that most of the charges against her would not this week. Instead, writes nesses closest to the violence Mary Braid, the archbishop were simply too flaky, criminal or discredited, But some credible witnesses did emerge, particularly from the families of victims allegedly murdered on Mrs Mandela's orders.

The hearings also produced largely consistent and exciliation" manufactured on Mandela and her boys". Few Thursday between Winnie can really still doubt that the Madikizela-Mandela and Joyce Mother of the Nation was by the Scipei, the mother of Stompie late 1980s a violent, unpre-Mocketsi, 14, one of her alleged dictable despot, totally unaccountable to her community

That alone matters when Mrs Mandela is just two weeks Reconciliation Commission and trom seeking high office in the the brave and dangerous ex- ANC; which would be a spring-

For some, of course, race is the only concern. Mrs Mandela must be protected because she is a prominent black leader

The view is ill conceived,

CROC STILL HAS TEETH Mow many chances can a former state pres-

Yesterday PW Boths was expected to be arrested and charged for failing to comply with a TRC subpoena to testify at a public hearing into the workings of the apartheid state. Instead the Commission gave him another chance - his third - to get involved with

a process he has dismissed as a circus. The official reason given by the TRC for the issuing of a third subpoena is that the second had technically expired. But it's no secret that the Groot Krokodil's (Great Crocodile) previous refusals to attend the hearing are a major political headache.

The Commission does not want its pursuit of him to become seen as the persecution of an old and ailing man. — Mary Braid

experiment is being closely Firstly, in this quasi-religious people were once again used process, sin had been discovered and discarded. wholesale human rights abuse is to be fairly widely spread. And two district camps - black and difficult to decide whether I'm families demanding the TRC inmore angry with the TRC, for vestigate her alleged gross hu-

For eight days Mrs Mandela leader of the Methodist Church, obviously absent. It reduced had listened to allegations that hit it right. He said the Winnie the TRC, of which I have been she and her notorious Mandela scandal was about the abuse of a defender, to a gameshow with United Football Club were in- small people by the powerful. It Archbishop Tutu as the well-

least six murders and many se- with Mrs Mandela in mind) to become like those we most despise (the brutal custodians of

the apartheid system). The context in which Mrs stand up in a court; the wit- Mandela's alleged abuses took place was clearly laid out. Azar Cachalia, one of the few brave ANC figures to unequivocally condemn Mrs Mandela (and for that he can expect to suffer if she does rise to power), said anarchy reigned in Soweto. Thousands of youths, displaced and psychologically disturbed by the civil war, roamed the township, using on each other the torture techniques the state had inflicted on them.

> Jerry Richardson, Mrs Mandela's former henchman, now serving life for murdering Stompie, also testified that the boy was tortured using techniques borrowed from the Boers, Violence had bred violence on an horrific scale.

> Mrs Mandela showed no understanding of this. She was deficint, unwavering and, despite a vague apology prised from her by a begging Archbishop Tutu. totally unrepentant. On Thursday she was the same old Winnie; charismatic and strong but without insight or humility. She

made a mockery of the Commission by denying everything and leaning on witnesses who later failed to show. A consummate populist, she turned the TRC into a political rally and used smears, racism and sareasm to swipe at her detractors and ac-

So why was she feted like a heroine at the end when the mother of Lolo Sono, in whose murder Mrs Mandela was implicated by credible witnesses, was weeping that there was no justice and Mrs Seipei, having delivered the PR cuddle, was sitting alone and rather lost in the

emptying hall. The little

This was no time for cuddles. all too common and mechanisms secondly, the Winnie hearings Small people do matter and so have not divided opinion into does truth: particularly in a country which lived a filthy lie day's Teletubby-style reconcil- white. After all, those who suf- for so long. As the TRC would iation so galling. It is still fered were her own; and the usually tell you, there is no short

Mrs Mandela should never Bishop Peter Storey, the reconciliation when truth was so volved in the late 1980s in at is possible, he said, (clearly meaning but misguided host.



Gameshow host? Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who halted proceedings when Winnie was on the ropes

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A Mossad agent manufactured false information about Syria for five years, misleading the last three Israeli prime ministers. Patrick Cockburn reports from Jerusalem on the scandal that may finally destroy the reputation of Israel's foreign intelligence

In the summer of 1996 Mossad began to report that Syrian forces were massing in southern Lebanon, preparing to launch a lightning strike on the Israeli-

occupied Golan Heights. The attack never came. But Israeli fears created a diplomatic furore at the time. Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, persuaded President Clinton to ask Syria for an explanation. Damascus came to believe that Israeli alarm was a

smokescreen to mask its own aggressive intentions.

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt told Yitzhak Mordechai. the Israeli defence minister. on a visit to Cairo: "This week President Assad [of Syria] called me at least five times, and told me that you are about to launch a surprise attack on him." Gen Mordechai was cautious about the Mossad reports, but increased the supply of ammunition and equipment to the army.

Mossad agent had manufactured the information, as he had been doing since before 1993. Israeli censorship has prevented the media revealing the identity of the agent or why he was considered such a reliable source, but for five years he delivered reports exaggerating

the Syrian threat posed to Israel. The news could not have happened at a worse time for Mossad, which means Institute

It now emerges that a for Intelligence and Special Tasks, Its reputation, aided by Hollowood and thriller writers. was always exaggerated. But in September it suffered its worst and most public disaster since it was founded in 1951. In the Jordanian capital Amman, two agents were captured when they tried to poison an official of Hamas, the Islamic militant organisation. To get them back Israel had to release Sheikh Yassin, the jailed Hamas leader.

distributed by the agency when it was led by Shabtai Shavit and Uzi Arad, now the diplomatic adviser to Mr Netanyahu. At a time when Israeli military intelligence was saying that Syria had made a strategic decision desire to impress his superiors. for peace Mossad was claiming the opposite.

the Mossad official in fabricat- the affair. Politicians and gen-

The present affair will dam- ing the information? Israeli age Mossad's reputation even commentators suggest he may further. The disinformation was have come from the ideological right and wanted to sabotage negotiations with Syria. They add he may also have been acting out of greed, suggesting that he was pocketing money intended for a Syrian agent, or a

The US reportedly wants an explanation from Israel, which What were the motives of has set up its own inquiry into

erals are denying that they took wrong decisions based on the false reports. But there is no doubt that the credibility of the agency has been permanently damaged among Israel's political and security decision-makers. "As far as we are concerned the Syrian mess' is much worse than the [Amman] affair," a Mossad source told the daily Yediot Aharanot. "It is hard to fathom how such a thing could sprout among us."

Aborigines' quest for land forces Australia to the polls

Aboriginal land rights have returned to divide Australia. After the upper house of parliament yesterday rejected a bill limiting Aboriginal rights, Robert Milliken in Sydney says the country faces an election dominated by race.

John Howard, prime minister of the conservative coalition government, has threatened to have parliament dissolved and to call a general election if he cannot win agreement to legislation which he says would protect outback farmers from Aboriginal land claims. But, after a stormy week of political brinkmanship, the Senate unscathed. yesterday sank Mr Howard's bill when it negotiable.

The issue has catapulted Aboriginal land rights to the forefront of Australian politics and sparked the country's most fiery debate on race in memory. It has divided city and country against each other and pitched church leaders against politicians. Some churchmen have described the government's proposals as "racist", while government MPs have called on farmers and their families to boycott their local churches.

On Thursday, De-Anne Kelly, an MP in the National Party, the coalition's junior, rural-based partner, claimed that farmers in north Queensland were amassing illegal guns to fight off Aborigines who may lay claims to their land. She described Noel Pearson, a prominent Aboriginal barrister from Cape York, north Queensland, as a co-exist on the same land. It added, though,

islation amounts to "legal apartheid" and has described those who drew it up as "racist

Mr Howard and his ministers have managed to portray Aborigines - who comprise 1.5 per cent of the population - as a threat from which the rest of Australia, particularly farmers and miners, must be protected. The prime minister raised the stakes earlier this week when he told government MPs that he had entered a "covenant" with farmers and miners from which he would not walk away. "We don't intend to be morally intimidated," he declared. Last Sunday, Mr Howard made an unprecedented address to the nation on prime-time television appealing to the Senate to pass his legislation

The dispute has arisen because of a High struck out key clauses that he says are not Court judgment last December over the legal status of pastoral leases. These leases were first granted late last century to allow white farmers to settle on vast outback holdings covering land the size of small European countries. Aborigines, whose forebears had lived on such lands for centuries. were not consulted and were often taken away and put in white-run reserves.

The concept of native land title itself was established only in 1992, when the High Court overturned the legal fiction that Australia was "empty land" when Europeans settled in 1788. That historic judgment allowed Aborigines to make claims only on unused land owned by the state. But in last December's judgment, on a case brought by the Wik people of north Queensland. the court extended its earlier ruling by saying that native title and pastoral leases could

"thug". Mr Pearson says the disputed leg- that pastoral rights would always prevail in the event of any conflict.

The ruling has sent rural Australia into spin, with farmers demanding that Mr Whether they have intended to or not, Howard legislate to extinguish native title on farming leases altogether. His bill did not go that far, but it did make it hard for Aborigines to make claims to such land by refusing them the right to negotiate and insisting that they would need a physical. rather than a spiritual, or ancestral, connection with the land to qualify.

When the bill reached the Senate a fortnight ago, after passing the House of Representatives, Brian Harradine, an independent senator who holds the balance of power, joined with the Labor opposition. Greens and Democrats, to amend it in ways that would give Aborigines wider power to make claims.

Now that the Senate has made those changes, Mr Howard can submit his original bill to the Senate once again after three months. If the Senate still refuses to pass it intact, he can advise the governorgeneral to dissolve parliament and call a general election, gambling that he will win and then call a joint sitting of both houses to pass the bill.

But it is a big gamble. The coalition, and Mr Howard personally, have fallen dangerously behind Labor and their leader. Kim Beazley, in opinion polls, Leading newspapers have called on Mr Howard to abandon any idea of an election fought on land rights, which everyone agrees would degenerate into an ugly focus on race and do Australia irreparable damage as it prepares to host the 2000 Olympics. But Mr Howard is stubborn. The further he digs himself in, the less inclined he will be to back down and to jeopardise his leadership.



Land and freedom: The concept of native title in the Australian outback was established in 1992. A further judgmen allowed native title to co-exist with pastoral rights Photograph: Colorif

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China: the dirty man of the East with a world to lose

China today produces only a tenth of the pollution that America inflicts on the planet. But by 2015, a rapidly-growing economy may lead to it overtaking the United States as the biggest producer of greenhouse gases.

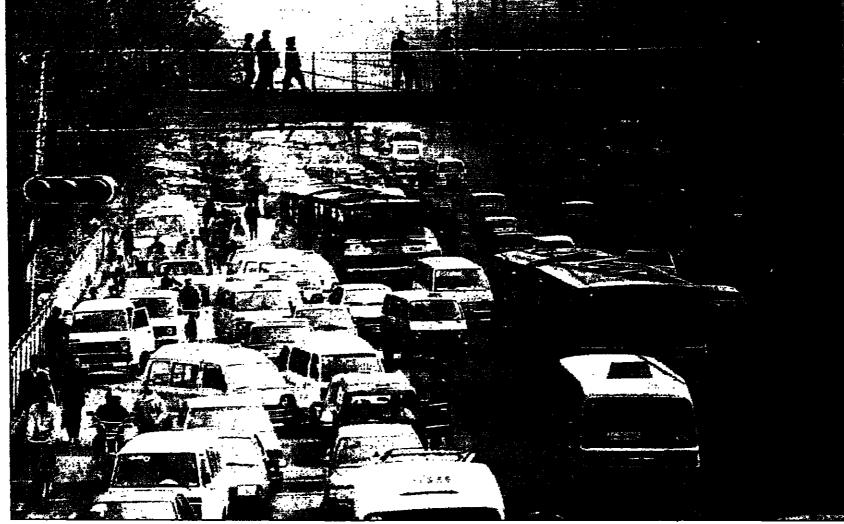
Tereso Poole asks if it is too late to stop China turning into the world's biggest environmental

In Peking, the first sign that winter is approaching is when squadrons of tricycle carts appear on the streets ferrying stacks of coal briquettes which fuel the heating stoves in the city's traditional houses. The second sign is when one washes one's face at the end of the day and the water runs off a dark grey colour. By the time the snow comes, the air is so thick with particles that the flakes act like a welcome air-cleaning system, gathering the coal dust as they fall.

"Today most Chinese cities are covered by blankets of harmful airborne particulates," said a World Bank report on China this year. Two decades of rapid economic growth have hugely improved standards of living, but at considerable cost to the environment. As well as threatening the health of the Chinese, the country's rapidly growing combustion of fossil fuels is a key component in any calculation of how to limit global climate change over the next century. But China is adamant that discussions in Kyoto will not apply to developing countries.

Across China, the main pollution culprit is coal, which provided 78 per cent of primary energy demand in 1995. Accord-sessing the situation, pointing out that per of economic development? The Euroing to European Commission officials, China admits that coal's contribution will not fall below 70 per cent before 2050.

At the moment, the total carbon dioxide emissions of China are about half that of its people be constrained by environof the US, with the gap narrowing every mental targets which the Western world did vear. But China rejects this approach to as- not have to contend with at a similar stage in a position to earmark increased funds chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons was tually take global warming seriously, be-



capita greenhouse gas emissions now in China are just one-tenth that of the US.

Why, it asks, should a country still struggling adequately to feed and clothe millions

peans have some sympathy with China, unlike the US which is pressing for voluntary commitments in Kyoto.

With China embarking on socially risky reform of state enterprises, the environment is down the agenda. Asia, generally, is not

for the environment following the recent economic upheavals. This means that dirty industries will probably continue to find a home in the East.

In 1995, China became the world's largest producer of ozone-depleting substances, after the production of these

banned in many industrial countries. China did commit itself to reducing 1996 consumption of these substances to the 1991 level, but that target was not met. Nor is it clear that China will fulfil plans to ban

the use of CFCs in aerosols in 1998. There is no doubt that China will even-

A cloud of pollution hanging in the air over the traffic on a denselypacked road in Peking. Two decades of economic growth have increased standards of living but damaged the environment Photograph: Rex Features

cause if too has a lot to lose. According to Chinese studies, a 1 metre rise in sea levels, combined with storm surges and tides. would displace 67 million people at current population levels.

However, there is a difficulty in trying to focus minds on a problem which will not take effect for a century or more, when little is even being done to address existing

China is an environmental disaster area, as the following World Bank statistics illustrate:

 Children in Shenyang, Shanghai and other big cities have blood-lead levels averaging 80 per cent higher than levels considered dangerous to mental development:

• The levels of particles and sulphur in China's cities exceeds World Health Organisation and Chinese standards by two to five

 The leading cause of death in China is now chronic obstructive pulmonary disease - emphysema and chronic bronchitis - with mortality rates five times that in the US: • In 1996, less than 7 per cent of municipal wastewater was treated:

And acid rain affects one-third of Chi-

"Every now and again you see elements of fear in the Chinese government about the extent of the environmental damage which is done by their industry," said an EU official in town this week. But China wants help from the West - primarily technology - to help clean up the mess, it such a clean-up is to everybody's advantage.

Just as Malaysia maintains that the developed world should help pay to safeguard the remaining tropical rain forests, in the 21st century China may start making the same demands over measures to scale back its greenhouse gases.

North-South rift threatens to sink climate treaty

Poor countries are furious about the rich world's proposal to limit their rising emissions of pollution. Nicholas Schoon in Kyoto explains why they are so outraged.

The great north-south divide tions in Japan. With only five days left, the threat loomed larger last night.

That was because of New treaty should be widened to inworld as well as the wealthy, industrialised countries.

"It's absolutely unacceptable," said the chief negotiator big developing countries, espefor the developing world, Mark cially India and China, must sign Nwandosya, a Tanzanian engineering professor. Argentina's rapid emission growth. representative appealed to New Zealand: "Please, withdraw this proposal for the good of the conference.

The unfinished treaty, now the subject of late-night wrangling, was never meant to cover the Third World, Two-anda-half years ago, in Berlin, rich countries agreed that by the time the conference now under way

alone - would have agreed on what cuts to make in their climate-changing emissions over the first decade of the next century. It was called the Berlin Mandate, and it bound only the developed world, because it has produced the vast majority of greenhouse gases to date. These countries still produce more than half the annual total.

But emissions are rising fast has long threatened to scupper in the developing countries and equal and then overtake, that of the developed countries

Seeing that, and under Zealand's proposal that the pressure from a Republicandominated Congress, the Clinclude most of the developing ton administration wants to shift the goalposts. In the run-up to Kyoto the

up to at least slowing their

Australia feels the same way, and now New Zealand has given this demand firm expression with vesterday's written pro-

It says that at Kyoto the developing countries must promise, by 2002, precisely how much they will slow down the rise in their emissions over the next 12 years up to 2014. Only in Kyoto ended they - and they - the very poorest nations, most-

ly in sub-Saharan Africa, would be excluded. The conference host, Japan, said the proposal provided "a good basis for negotiations".

The EU and Britain were more lukewarm, saying that while Third World countries must be brought into the treaty soon, this was not expected at Kyoto. The average Chinese produces one-eighth the global-warming carbon dioxide of the UN climate treaty negotia- by about 2015 the Third World's the average American, and the combined annual output will average Indian only one-twen-

Professor Nwandosya suggested that if countries such as the US insist on the Third World making undertakings now, the Kyoto negotiations will fail and there would be no global warming treaty.

US has been proposing that the "Global health warnings" should be attached to advertisements for oil and petrol, a pension-fund director suggested at the conference yesterday.

They would be similar to the warnings which accompany all advertisements for tobacco: a short government message stating that consumption of fossil fuels was threatening dangerous changes in climate.

This is a precautionary measure which all governments can readily take," said Tessa Tennant, of NPI Global Care In-

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Britain struggles to meet emission cuts as demand for electricity surges

carbon will be emitted into the atmosphere by British householders between 1995 and 2000 as they take advantage of cheaper energy, a report for fall overall by about 22 per the Government has contirmed.

It says greater consumer choice brought about by privatisation will mean an 11 per cent increase in demand for electricity and a 5 per cent increase in demand for gas.

Extra electricity use will pump between four and 10 ity to meet the pledges it million tons into the atmosphere in the five-year period, according to Oxford Economic Research Associates (Oxera), depending on how much of the demand is met by coal-fired power stations.

The increase in demand for gas will add a further million tons of earbon. The government has already admitted in a written parliamentary answer that another million

Up to 12 million extra tons of tons of carbon will be emitted a wide variety of schemes inbecause of the cut in VAT on fuel to 5 per cent. The report says domestic

gas and electricity prices will cent between 1995 and 2000. Although it was completed in August, ministers only agreed to publish it last week in response to parliamentary questions from the Labour MP

In another development which will affect Britain's abilmakes at Kyoto, it has emerged that the Energy-Saving Trust, which channels money from the Government and the electricity industry into energy-saving schemes, is to have its budget halved.

Staff at the trust are expecting to hear this month whether the cut planned by the Conservative government. will be implemented. The trust channels funds to

cluding cheap, energy-efficient fridges for low-income families and help in buying high-efficiency boilers, insulation and thermostats.

Andrew Warren, director of the Association for the Conservation of Energy, said Britain's commitments to cut pollution would be hard to meet. "If the government believes it is proper to have falling fuel prices for social reasons you have to take counter-cyclical measures."

Angela Eagle, environ-

ment minister, said there would be a consultation on energy consumption after Kyoto. "The ... report will be taken into account in the government's consideration of future regulation of the energy industry and of the achievement of energy efficiency climate change targets."

— Fran Abrams, Political Correspondent



nd is nigh: stagehands get ready to move in as the Peter Hall Company take their last bow tonight at the Old Vic

Photograph: Rui Namer

Exeunt omnes. Farewell then to the Old Vic

Eight months ago Sir Peter Hall, founder of the RSC, former director of the National Theatre, launched his own round-the-clock, seven-day-a-week repertory company at London's historic Old Vic. Now the 'For Sale' signs have gone up and the curtain must fall.

As Hall & Co prepare to give their final performance tonight, Jasper Rees watches from the wings.

the Old Vic to see Shining Souls, a homeless man sat with hand cupped at the foot of the central pillar of the famous old portico. From tomorrow morning, the company which for the last eight months has occupied the building will be able to join him on the pavement. The Peter Hall Company comes to the end of its season tonight and, because the Old Vic has gone on sale, will not be back in February as originally intended. It too has lost the roof over its head.

When darkness falls on the Old Vic it will affect the local economy of Waterloo from beggars upwards. But it isn't quite the end for the Old Vic, and maybe not the end at all. Slava's Snow Show moves in for three weeks over Christmas, by which time we may know who has bought the building from its thing into it, working through

Canadian owners, Ed and David Mirvish. Most of the bids invited in an informal tender process are apparently from parties with theatrical plans for the place. But not all potential buyers aim to use the building for performance, and would require permission for putting it to alternative use from the local planning authority. It was recently reported in The Stage that Alan Whitehead. who runs the Secrets strip chain, would be interested in turning it into a national lapdancing centre. He must have read somewhere that it used to be the home of Laurence Olivier's National Theatre.

two-pronged sense of loss in the from what we ling stemming from the understand fact that both the resident company and the building's management are preparing to evacuate. It's very easy to confuse the two, because the identities of both have become so quickly intertwined. People who work for the company speak as fondly of the theatre itself as of Hall's ambitious rotation of a classic and modern repertoire. "I can't really explain how brilliant it's been," says wig mistress Sarah Palmer. "I was with the RSC for 11 years before, but this has been more family-oriented. We knew it was special right from the very beginning. The building is very beautiful, and we're all in one place. We have just become closer and closer as the year

went on. Everybody is so en-

thusiastic about working that

they're really putting every-

their lunch breaks and tea

breaks. It's very rare." Tonight Sir Peter Hall will invite everyone associated with the building up on stage for a final bow, "I'll probably cry a lot," says Palmer. "There won't be a dry eye in the house." agrees Greg Hicks, who, as Edgar in tonight's final performance of King Lear, gets to speak the last lines the Peter Hall Company will deliver on this stage. "I will find it very difficult," he says. "I'm privately extremely touched that it happens to be me that's saying it. God knows, I hope it's not the last time that Shakespeare will be spoken on

In the meantime, there's a this stage, but there's no reason to suppose that won't be the case." Not every-

one in the

building specifically lamenting that departure of

the Peter Hall Company. Andrew Leigh has been the Old Vic's general manager since 1979, three years before the Mirvishes purchases the theatre. "It is a wrench but 18 years is an awfully long time to stay anywhere. It's probably good for me that I'm leaving. I think the acute sensation will probably come on 31 January, when I come to lock the door and close it down and switch out the lights and nobody else is here. I and my assistant and the accountant will be the last peo- a week. "Even now it's difficult between the building and the

ple to leave." He will be using the final month to dispose of the theatre's archive. "I am determined that whoever acquires the Old Vic should not do what many other theatre owners do. which is just to throw it all away." The papers are destined for the theatre collection in the University of Bristol drama department, where there is

nanced by the Mirvishes. Down on the stage door. Matt Harrington is relinquishing his post after a six-year vigil. During the Peter Hall

Company's tenure, he says, "it

The last line is from Edgar:

The weight of this sad time we must obey,

Shall never see so much, nor live so long."

Exeunt with a dead march, carrying the bodies

has been three or four times as

busy for me. But it's such a fam-

ily atmosphere, so it's going to

feel like the break-up of a fam-

ily. Friends say, 'why don't you

get a proper job? But they

The actor whom Harrington

has signed in most regularly this

year is Greg Hicks, who has tak-

en on five different roles, in-

cluding his lank-haired,

dribbling Pozzo in Waiting for

Godot, and was at one point per-

ROBERT HANKS

THE WEEK ON RADIO

don't understand."

a room especially devoted to the

Old Vic archive. It is partly fi-

there would be a genuine sense of euphoria." Hicks, like many others in the building, has worked in large companies before, including the National Theatre, "but you have a structural difference here",

to grow a career like you grow

a pot plant," he says. "You're

very rarely in the same place of

stable growth, which is what is

what is so brilliant about this

company. It was a company that

would grow together. Hopefully

it will have a continuity. In an

ideal world it would be here.

Were Peter Hall to come on

stage and say, 'On I January I

start another company'. I think

says, "Here is this one small, warm building with a lifeblood Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say. The oldest hath borne most. We that are young right back to when it was first built in the 1860s. Without be-

ing sentimen-

absolutely feel that in this building you can try anything out and you wouldn't be condemned for doing so. The RSC for actors is a more nervous empire. Sometimes people get lost in the system. This building breeds a sense of security. Plus the fact that there is a genuine sense in this company of everybody getting a good crack of the whip." That includes the stagehands, half a dozen of whom were re-

cruited as extras for Leur. forming no less than nine times The secret of the relationship

company lies in their mutual suitability. Each has had something to give the other, and it's unlikely that either will find that with other partners. The impresario Bill Kenwright is looking for a home for the company north of the river. "But it's not going to be so easy in the West End." says Hicks, "just by virtue of the fact that it's the West End." Meanwhile, there will be a diaspora of talent. Leigh is going to the Shaftsbury. Palmer has been offered work at the Globe and the Young Vic. Stagehand Stuart Goodier says: "I may be doing my own oneman show. Stagehand work is filling in for when I can get some acting work."

"Other employers," says Hicks, who is bound for the Glasgow Citizens, "look at people who work in this building. either at the administrative level or the stage management. level or in costumes or wigs, and think: if they can make that work, they must be good."

Harrington on the stage door is "going to Chicago", he says. It's unclear whether he's referring to the city or the musical. Both seem light years away from a theatre where darkness. har the brief intervention of \$lava's Snow Show, is about to fall. As the audience rushes to catch the last show, it's almost as if you can hear the front-of-house announcement on the PA. "Ladies and gentlemen, will you please vacate your seats. The Old Vic closes in one minute."

The final performance of King Lear is tonight at 7.30pm. Boxoffice: 0171-928 7616

It's far from over for laddism's nice guy

Lee Hurst Wimbledon Theatre

The game's up for New Lads, critics are whispering. They think it's all over for They Think It's All Over.

There was precious little evidence of the decline and fall of the New Laddish empire, however, in the reception accorded to Lee Hurst's stand-up show at the Wimbledon Theatre on Thursday, His every gag was wildly applauded by a very mixed audience which encompassed both granules and girli::s. On They Think It's All Over,

Hurst's non-stop, over-competitive banter can get on your wick. But on his own with no one else to best, he is much more relaxed, able to run with his more inspired riffs without trampling over other people.

That's not to say that the whole show is as smooth as his trademark pate. Ironically, for instance, his closing routine about They Think It's All Over - along the lines of "oh, the laughs we have behind the scenes" - rather dragged. There ences warm to him as though he were that funny bloke from the pub who's just happened to wander on stage.

He got big whoops of recognition when he declared that every bloke in this room will agree that buying a kebab on a Saturday night is the final admission that you're not going to pull. Even the kebab-shop owner joins in - would you like chilli sauce on your no-sex

For a man known as the most laddish thing this side of a stag night. Hurst is also capable of surprising subtlety. He imagined a yuppie on the phone flicking through his Filofax on the phone at the moment the IRA bomb at the Nat West Tower went off: "I've got a window in my diary. No, I really have got a window in my diary. Whatever label is attached to

him - laddish, childish, or just plain daft - Hurst is an undeniably accomplished and amiable stand-up. As an encore he generously ceded the stage to an audience-member who came on to propose publicly to his girlfriend. When she



were also sequences blue enough to bring a blush to the cheeks of the stucco angels strumming harps around the proscenium arch.

At other times, the show veered into childish material which chimed rather too readily with the primary-colours set and teddy-bears-andballoons backdrop left up from the afternoon's Playdays stageshow. Did we need to hear about his bout of diarrhoea in quite such detail?

All the same, the majority of Hurst's act affords him the opportunity to show off his best profile as Likable Lee. Audi-

accepted from the front of the circle. Hurst proved his ad lib acumen by calling up to her. "There's a car available if you want to get away. We've got a safe-house ready. Salman's a really nice guy - you'll get on with him."

With that, he went off to the sort of cheers once reserved for World Cup-winning goals scored by another diamond geezer called Hurst.

Lee Hurst plays Northampton Demgate (01604 24811) tonight, and Plymouth Pavilions (01752 229922) on Monday.

lames Rampton

A homespun Irish 👍 tale with heart

Tricycle Theatre, London

Sive, a teenage orphan living with her aunt, uncle and grandmother in the unvielding climate of rural Ireland, is desperate to learn the truth about her parents. "All I know about my mother is that she died when I was a baby." Unbeknown to her, she was couceived out of wedlock and her absent father drowned just

days after she was born. Anyone who saw Martin McDonagh's The Cripple of Inishmaan will be experiencing a weird kind of déjà vu. That play pivots around an almost identical set of circumstances. This one also opens with a scene between a cantankerous grandmother and her tough daughter-in-law, thus mirroring McDonagh's first bit. The Beauty Queen of

Before anyone leaps to the conclusion that John B Keane is clambering aboard McDonagh's "Oirish" bandwagon, there are two crucial facts to consider, First, Keane is Irish through and through as opposed to Camberwell's Me-Donagh, Secondly, Sive was written in 1959, before Mc-Donagh was born. This engag-

ing tale is the genuine article. Then, as now, the key concern for poverty-stricken farmers is mimey. Mike (doughty Vinnie McCabe) comes home having carned an impressive £16 and 111 shillings. This is put into harsh perspective when he learns from his intractable wife Mena (implacable Marion O'Dwyer) that thanks to the local matchmaker, they could make £000 if they agree to marry off their niece. The groom has "grass for 20 cows and fat cattle besides": only trouble is.

he's nearly four times Sive's age. The rest of this everyday story of country folk is taken up with the tussle of their consciences as they try to separate

romance from reality. Keane builds up the cases for and against with a ripe poetic language. "Never, if the sun, moon and stars fall down out of the heavens," is Mike's initially horrified reaction to his wife's fierce urgings. Elsewhere, notably in the contrived structure with its all-too-convenient appearances and absences, the almost homespun tale is, frankly, hokey. But just as you are about to write him off, he builds a scene of high tension around an unread letter sitting centre-stage, its inflammatory contents burning to be read.

That so much of this amusing play works. despite its creakiness, is a tribute to the cast in this Watford Palace Theatre co-production. Director Ben Barnes misses opportunities to investigate and ignite atmospheres between some of. the characters, but Simon O'Gorman as the matchmaker fills the stage with energy. heginning with a seemingly benign cunning and building to a captivating, greedy

ruthlessness Keane knows there are good yarms and much dramatic mileage to be spun out of closed communities. Although he leans towards old-fashioned melodrama, he has one characteristic (in spades) that Mc-Donagh entirely lacks: heart. The final plot twist is affecting rather than merely clever. Instead of soullessly parading his dramatist's skills, his surprise takes you deeper into the world of his characters.

To 17 Jan (0171-328 1000) David Benedict

THE WEEK IN THE ARTS DAVID LISTER

Gillian Wearing is one of the nicer Turner prize winners, chatting affably and openly about her "video art" at the prize dinner last Tuesday until the moment I raised the question of her most famous video - 60 Minutes Silence consists of a group of policemen standing motionless for the best part of an bour until the odd one shuffles, another twitches, a

third lets rip a cathartic shriek. Were they real policemen. asked? Ms Wearing became coy and stuttered. We'll take that as a no, then. The Tate press office will neither confirm

nor deny that the subjects may not actually be policemen, nor will Ms Wearing's dealer. Why all the evasion over a prize-winning work of art? Could it be the judges comment publicised by the Tate that "her work reveals the often strange or disturbing realities that lie beneath the apparently calm surface of everyday appearances. It also offers a rich insight into the lives of ordinary people." Is it still an insight into contemporary living if the people are acting a role?

Definitely, says Virginia Button, Turner Prize historian and assistant keeper in the Modern Collection at the Tate. "The insights still hold good." That has to be taking art criticism on to another planet.

Some of the talk at the Turner Prize dinner was that two artists had turned down invitations to



be on the shortlist. Julian Opie, who has an installation at Heathrow Airport, was one. Perhaps the reason artists give up the chance of £20,000 and national glory is fear of having their work analysed by contemporary art experts.

Some slogans adopted by the campaign for free admissions to museums could do with a bit of spin doctoring. BECTU has put out a leaflet with a plea by artist

Anthony Gormley: "I feel passionately that museums should be free - the only way both art and life can meaningfully interact without let or hindrance. It is not a commercial relationship. One should go to museums as often as one goes to the supermarket, to recharge your imagination larder." Not the greatest analogy, Man and supermarket do have a commer-

cial relationship. You pay to sample the wares.

Meanwhile, differ-

ent attitudes are ev-

ident north of the

border. I visited the Museum of Scotland currently being built in Edinburgh to show Scotland's history. The museum opens in a year's time and the views from the top over Edinburgh and the surrounding countryside are spectacular. The different attitudes to museum charges come in the appeal to raise money for the building. Some donors have said they will only give money if charges are imposed. At least one of these is a well-known celebrity. I am not allowed to

divulge his name. Even though

I've started, I cannot finish...

Too 'Disney' to be life-affirming When humour doesn't come or acoustic variety. In fact, the off, we abuse it in purely negative terms - it's unfunny, is all. When pathos fails to move us, we have a whole battery of words to train on it: not just sentimental but mawkish, maudlin, schmaltzy, soppy, sloppy, slushy.

All of which apply to To the Wedding, last week's Sunday Play on Radio 3. I was looking forward to this. For one thing, it is based on a novel by John Berger, who also helped with the job of dramatising it, and his feature Will It Bc a Likeness? - a playful, buttonholing sequence of paradox and speculation on modern values - was one of the highlights of last year. For another thing, it was produced by Theatre de Complicite, one of our most exciting and original theatre companies, and you'd expect them to have some fresh

Not so, unfortunately, Although much of the play was recorded on location around Europe - the characters are converging from various points on the wedding of Gino and his HIV-positive bride, Ninon this only paid off at one or two points in terms of life-like sound

ideas about radio drama.

production observed quite rigidby the traditional patternings of radio drama - dialogue placed firmly in the foreground, narrative voiceover done with a closeup microphone.

But you doubt that a more lively acoustic could have convinced you that this east of characters, with their simple dignity, earthy wisdom and pure, sensual enthusiasms (food, sex, dancing) were anything but puppets. twitching to the tune of Berger's simplistic Arcadian politics - he wants to celebrate the persistence of family, and love, and peasant iovs in the laws of modera capitalism. And much of Berger's language is wooden and mock-profound - like Ninon's lament, when she learns that she has the virus, that she faces "latex solitude for ever and ever" (not exactly a great advert for safe sex, given that the play was broadcast to mark World

Aids Day). It all ended with Gino and Ninon dancing on the sand near the mouth of the Po ("We don't need music," she tells him). The intention, clearly, was to be life-affirming; but if life can only he affirmed through such artificial. Disneyfied joys, you start to wonder whether it's really all it's cracked up to be.

It's a relief to turn from this to the lightness and scepticism of Hello, Darling, I'm Home (Radio 2, Tuesday), in which Russell Davies looked at how the BBC has depicted the family over the years. This was a far more politically searching programme than To the Wedding: Davies showed how a caricuture of the nuclear family (mum. dad. boy, girl) has been permitted to dominate broadcasting in a way it has never dominated society, and in doing so made you realise how conservative and narrow that vision of the family is.

He also fitted in a range of alternative human experience: Terry Scott's bizarre obsession with the depth of his daughter's sexual knowledge; the Oedipal excesses of the Ronnic Corbett vehicle Sony!; Beryl Bainbridge describing how her mother-inlaw tried to shoot her; and a long, if ultimately fruitless, consideration of the role of the motherin-law joke. No sentimental gravity here - just lightness and

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19/SATURDAY STORY

Ever heard the Algerian national anthem? Why Nike wanted you to, and how the stunt failed

It was the Consumer's Revenge. Or the PR man's Nightmare. The Olympic champion, Quincy Watts, was into the back straight of the 400 metres and the gold looked in the bag when suddenly the sole of his Nike shoc parted from its upper. Watts staggered across the finishing line in fourth place. It was a spectacular and humiliating public relations disaster. For the athlete was at that point the focus of a television commercial for super-cushioned Air Max shoes made by Nike. Watts took his shoes and very publicly dumped them in a rubbish bin.

That was at the World Championships at Stuttgart in 1995, but they are punched the air in triumph when their shirts, running pants and sweatshirts man Donovan Bailey, in the space of just 9.84 seconds, became the Fastest Man in the World wearing Adidas

Not that Nike did not get its revenge. At the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta 12 firms paid £28m each to be named official sponsors. Adidas was one of them. Nike was not. But it stole the thunder by buying up every prominent billboard in town and plastering them with hard-hitting Nike ads which stole all the media attention. It also built its own Olympic village and then paid huge sums to all the top stars to appear there. It was so successful that in the run-up to the recent Olympic bid the games' goveming body insisted that every bidding city had to buy up all its poster sites for a six-week period covering the pames to prevent a repeat.

So Nike have turned their attention to football and the World Cup in France. There, Adidas have paid to set up an official "village" beneath the Fiffel Tower. Nike have been out-manoeuvred by the authorities so that they are able to locate their village only on the outskirts of the French capital. In response Nike have set the marketing industry abuzz with reports that the firm is to spend £20m on stunts to upstage Adidas again. Adidas are threatening "counter-stunts".

It's what the industry calls "guerilla marketing". It is aggressive and impertinent, according to Roger Baird of Marketing Week, who has spent the past month unsuccessfully trying to find out what the stunts might be. Of course, there may be none. Hype is an integral part of the conflict which for all its "guerilla" tag is taking on the characteristics of a full-scale setpiece big battle which makes the ancient conflict between Coke and

and other pushy contenders in the UK advertising, marketing and PR industries list of Top 20 "super-brands". Sportswear is now the big league. Almost half the shoes sold in the United States now are trainers.

More than that, sportswear is serious fashion. Not that it has that much to do with sport. Everyone from President Bill Clinton to Liam Gallagher of Oasis wears Adidas (for contrast. Blur's Damon Albarn wears Nike). Only about a fifth of the gear that Adidas sells is actually worn for sport. "Eighty per cent of our products are used for leisure," said an Adidas spokesman, "Sport has become the pop of the Nineties, Sportswear sales have gone at a phenomenal

rate in the past five years."

popular training shoe among burglars is the Nike Air Max, according to one police survey. Nike has begun to open Nike-only stores, styled in the portentous manner of a cultic temple rather than a mere shoe-shop.

Image is everything. It may only be Nike's technical experts who have its trademark tick - which Nike-men call the "swoosh" - tattooed on their thighs, but it is not uncommon to see street-smart kids with it shaved into their stubbled hair.

But image costs. Between 1987 and 1990, the average price of a training shoe in Britain doubled from £24.99 still gloating at Adidas, Nike's chief to £49.99, and today, prices of between rival, where the year after staff £99 and £200 are common. Football

> Eighty per cent of Adidas products are for leisure. Sport has become the pop of the Nineties'

are all similarly inflated. Retail prices are often 600 per cent of what it actually costs to produce the goods.

It is not hard to see where a lot of that margin goes. Nike pays out huge sums to major sporting superstars such as Tiger Woods, Pete Sampras and Eric Cantona. Michael Jordan, the legendary point guard for the Chicago Bulls basketball team, is reputed to earn \$10m a year from his Nike deal. Andre Agassi, who wore a Nike baseball cap throughout his Wimbledon triumph, is paid about \$2m a year. They do their best to earn the money. Michael Johnson wore gold trainers with a massive Nike tick when he won his Olympic gold medals in the 200 metres and 400 metres. Shane Warne, the Australian bowler, wears a Nike

It is all along way from the small shop lit only by a paraffin lamp in which in the 1920s Adi Dassler and his brother Rudolf, two sports-mad cobblers, began in Herzogenaurach, not far from Nuremberg, to make shoes for track and field athletes and footballers. In 1936, the black athlete Jesse Owens disproved Hitler's Aryan theories at the Berlin Olympics when Indeed Nike has recently beaten the won four Olympic gold medals wearing their shoes. The distinctive Adidas brand mark of three white stripes was developed in those days as a way of bolstering the shoes' sides.

More than 30 years later, Bill Bowerman, a track coach at the University of Oregon, and Phil Knight, a college runner, founded a similar business in America. The name Nike - the Greek goddess of victory - came to one of Knight's partners in a dream. A local graphic designer was paid \$35 to come up with the Nike

Today both have moved beyond running shoes into a whole range of sportswear. Nike now spends £5.6bn on marketing alone and commands about 35 per cent of the massive global market. Adidas trails behind with £2bn, but it has recovered from

BY PAUL VALLELY

from the period of the Antiquities bought it from Dassler's widow. sored by Mizuno to race in "wonder former chairman Robert Louis Dreyfus, it has almost totally revamped its product range, adopted a more prime. aggressive marketing strategy and overtaken the industry's third big player, Reebok, which was the market leader in the 1980s but which now spends a mere \$400m a year on sponsorship. Behind the big three is a pack of smaller companies such as Pony, Puma and Mizuno, and Britain's Umbro, which has stitched up the English football kit scene.

Until recently football remained outside the Nike sphere of influence. But the company's strategists have recently decided that this is the great hole in the sportswear market. First they signed an eight-year sponsorship deal with the US Soccer Federation worth £74m - a small investment, its analysis reckon, against the time when football takes off in America. Then, earlier this year, Nike signed the biggest sponsorship deal in the history of marketing - a £200m package with the Brazilian national football squad. To that they have added the national squads of Italy, Holland, Nigeria and series of individual players, including a £10m contract with the Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler. They are ready to challenge Adidas, which has done deals with Germany, France, Spain, Argentina, Yugoslavia, Romania, Swe-

den, Hungary, Morocco and China. But at a cost. It is not just that clashes occur when a player is sponsored by one firm and his team by another. They try to keep that quiet, although news of it leaked when half of the England rugby team appeared in a variety of footwear against Canada at Twickenham recently. Nike was annoyed to discover that the ace goal-kicker Rob Andrew preferred boots made by Mizuno. They insisted that he blacked out the

tell-tale white marks in future. Nobody who knows Nike was surprised. They are brash and arrogant, but they are in such a strong market position that you ignore them at your peril," said one insider. Indeed. But their brashness can cause them problems. During the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, they had the magisterial pole-vaulter Sergi Buteka at the centre of their ad campaign. "Spanish air traffic control has been informed said the ad. It was embarrassing, therefore, when Buteka "no-heighted". Then there was the great 1500 metres hope, the Algerian Noureddine Morceli, another Nike athlete. "Ever heard the Algerian national anthem? You will," said the Nike ad. And everyone did - but only when another Algerian. Hassiba Boulmerka, won one of the women's races - wearing someone else's shoes. Poor old Morceli was thrashed. Another Nike great white hope, Daniel O'Brien, didn't even get through the US trials.

The schadenfreude was not just Nike's, of course, In a world of rash claims, the 100 metres world recordholder, the American Leroy Burrell, was spon-

Under the chairmanship of Saatchi's shoes that will smash the world record". He lost to Carl Lewis, who everyone had written off as past his

But it was not just the reckless predictions which made Nike ads controversial. There was something about their aggressive tone. "It got them a lot of coverage in Atlanta," recalls Roger Baird. "They had ads with athletes throwing up as a sign of how gruelling the games were."

In Chicago, at a time when more than 100 youths had been killed for their trainers in the previous couple of years, a Nike commercial with the catchline "Get Some" was taken off the air after being said to glamorise gang warfare. A black civil rights group led by Jesse Jackson urged a boycott of Nike products for a time. But the row did nothing to depress Nike's general sales. Nor, apparently, did the controversy when US Muslims protested about a new Nike logo intended to look like flames on a line of basketball shoes with names like "Air Bakin" and "Air B-Que" - unfortunately the flames resembled the word "Allah" written in Arabic script. Korea. They have also bought up a After a threat to urge Muslims around the world to boycott Nike products, the firm withdrew the line and donated \$50,000 for a playground to an Islamic elementary school in the United

Then there was the "good-13-evil" ad, in which a team captained by Eric Cantona saw off a team of cyberspace and ended the match by booting the ball right through the stomach of one monster. It was banned from Danish cinemas and criticised by the football Nike objected to the fact that almost authorities, Fifa and the International Olympic Committee.

and one which is still growing in the United States, is over the low pay and appalling conditions of sport-shoe makers in Thailand and the Philippines. A report by Christian Aid showed that a woman worker producing Nike trainers in China would have to work nine hours a day, six days a week for 15 centuries, on current wages, to match the £929,113 salary of Nike's head, Phil Knight. One factory in Vietnam was reported to have made 61 women run two laps around a plant to discipline them for failing to meet production quotas and for wearing improper footwear.

President Clinton, in an attempt reverse months of disastrous publicity generated by the reports of ill-treatment of factory workers around the

Nike was annoyed that England's Rob Andrew preferred a rival. They insisted that he black out the tell-tale white marks

world, got Nike and other companies to sign an unprecedented agreement, a code of conduct on employment practices around the globe. Nike and the others would undertake to honour a 60-hour maximum working week - with overtime not to be forced - and to respect the minimum wage laws of the countries in which plants are located. They also undertook not to employ workers under the age of 14. In return, companies abiding by the code will be able to sew "No Sweat" labels into their products to reassure shoppers that in spending their money they are not indirectly

supporting slave labour. It may not be enough. "They've agreed a code of conduct but they haven't agreed on how to monitor it, avs Bethan Brookes, a researcher for Christian Aid. They want to monitor it themselves or get their auditors to do it. We think that's not indepen-

dent enough." Nor do many US consumers. American football stars are ing terminating their sponsorship contracts, disquieted are they. The market for training shoes has in any case taken a downturn in the United States. Shares in Nike have fallen heavily in the US this summer. American kids are turning their backs on trainers in favour of more rugged footwear. Whether the cause is concern over ethics or mere changes

thing is clear: the European and creasingly important to Nike and its

Nike has begun to take soccer very seriously. Europe's footballers are now finding that the money to be made from sponsorship can far outstrip their earnings from sport, Paolo Maidini, the Italian footballer, made more last summer from a Nike poster campaign than from playing in Euro 96. (Other soccer stars featured in the campaign, including Eric Cantona, picked up large amounts of money without even kicking a ball in the tournament.)

Already an direct impact on the sport is discernible. In the summer Nike acted as a broker in football's biggest-ever transfer - the £18m deal of Brazilian star Ronaldo, whom Nike sponsors, from Spain's Barcelona to Inter Milan of Italy. At first, insiders say, the company advised him against the transfer. At one stage, to protect its investment in the Brazilian star, Nike considered buying out his contract and lending him out to its sponsored football clubs around the world. Eventually a deal was done, but it was the first one in which a sponsor has interfered with football's decision-making process.

To Nike and Adidas there is nothing new in the idea. Earlier this year they organised two artificial events which have no bearing upon the formats of the athletics the events were rooted in. They created artificial distances. Donovan Bailey 18 Michael Johnson was billed as the Olympic 100m champ is the Olympic 200m champ and as Canada vs USA. But in reality the \$150m showdown at Toronto's SkyDome was Adidas vs Nike. Johnson, the American sprinter who won gold medals for both 200m and 400m at last summer's Olympic Games, had signed a six-year \$12m endorsement deal with Nike. Bailey was already in the Adidas stable. The hype before the event was formidable but the race itself was a flop, with Johnson pulling up short with an injured leg halfway through. He was ignominiously taken off the course in a golf-cart.

The day before, in Holland, Adidas had put up a \$1m prize for a world two-mile record. The protagonists were Noureddine Morceli of Algeria and Ethiopia's Haile Gebreselassie two of Adidas's leading clients. The winner would get the \$1m if he went under the eight-minute mark. They failed. But non-Adidas athletes were Recent re- not invited, so the impressive Kenvan ports are that runner, Daniel Komen, who may well have beaten them both, was ex-Nike's top cluded, By coincidence, Komen hapens to run for Nike.

Will we see such manipulation in football now? Nike have recently signed the Scottish champions, Rangers. "Nine out of ten: must do better," says the ad slogan it has ostentatiously posted outside Celtic's ground - Celtic set the record of nine league titles in a row, which Rangers has now equalled and hopes to beat. It is typical Nike. But what practical consequences, insiders are beginning to wonder, may follow when the Nike-men start pulling the strings?

Nike hopes to acquire an investment in the England team now. England is in the process of negotiating a new kit deal. All the big global companies, including Adidas, have tendered to supply the national team's kit, which is currently provided by Umbro. Nike are the favourites to replace





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Once the British knew of faraway places and distant cultures by trading with them, invading them, christianising them and colonising them. Now we play football with them. On the whole, football is the better way. The popular stereotypes of imperialism and war - of noble savages, backward races, cannibals, pygmies, nabobs, of heartless huns and inscrutable Japanese - are giving way to an equality of respect and a better understanding of the world. Football is the most powerful agent of modern internationalism.

This week's World Cup draw was one vast, popular geography lesson. Who knew or cared that Colombia had been turned into a land of refugees, its government powerless to stop right-wing paramilitaries wreaking revenge on Marxist guerrilla sympathisers, until England drew it in Group G on Thursday night? After all, the only reason most people could tell it apart from a space shuttle before Thursday, or know which continent it is in, was because Faustino Asprilla plays for Newcastle United.

The Scots, meanwhile, might feel that they know too much already about Brazil and Norway, a tribute to the educative power of global sporting prowess.

Who, though, could have expected the staid International Herald Tribune to print

the entire draw on its front page under the headline, "Cup draw pairs US and Iran"? The idea of a nation peopled entirely by fundamentalist mullahs and women in deep purdah taking to the turf in studded boots, shorts and shirts covered in advertising logos is enough to give the popular imagination pause. As the Trib rather drily commented, "it is hard to imagine two countries with less love for each other than the United States and Iran" (except possibly Iran's neighbour Iraq). Perhaps the shared experience of the offside rule will bring greater mutual un-

Football has already started to dissolve the myth of Iran as a drear theocracy, as Robert Fisk reported in our pages earlier this week. Sure, Allah was given the credit for the two goals in seven minutes in Melbourne which secured fran's place in the finals, but the nation - even some of its women - rejoiced in distinctly secular fashion when the victorious team was helicoptered in to Tehran's football stadium from the airport.

Football is the only true secular religion, providing a common culture for the world in the way Christendom and Latin once did for Europe. And Britain's integration into the global church - which it founded but has always seemed in danger



of being left behind by - has been cemented in the past two years.

Since the Bosman ruling in 1995 which freed up the transfer market, and the injection into football of Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB millions, the number of foreign players in Premiership clubs has now hit 150. The running commentary of any top game is today a specialist task for qualified linguists. Led by Norwegians, threatening to repeat their Viking depredations on Scotland's World Cup hopes, and Australians, British football has become a global market.

Last weekend saw a vivid demonstration of this when Celtic and Dundee fielded 28 players, including substitutes, for the Scottish Coca Cola Cup, 14 of whom were foreigners.

Travel broadens the mind, even if most of the travelling is done by international football stars while the minds of lumpen supporters stay glued to the television. But the mind of the average football supporter, once a haven for basest racial prejudice and anti-foreigner sentiment is now programmed to display adulation not just for the many black players in the game but to pronounce Karlheinz Riedle, the Liverpool striker.

As was reported this week, the proportion of black players far exceeds that in the population as a whole, as in American football, a great cultural engine of racial equality in the States. The black superstars here, such as Wright. Ince and Cole, are heroes for black and white alike.

Meanwhile foreigners are not merely respected but, as Cantona was, elevated to prophet status in the new religion. He has been followed by Zola (Chelsea, Italian). Bergkamp (Arsenal. Dutch) and

Schmeichel (Manchester United, Danish). Nor is this simply a market in players:

several leading British teams are now managed by foreigners: the Dutch Rund Gullit at Chelsea, the Swiss Christian Gross at Tottenham and the French Arsène Wenger at Arsenal, for example.

The World Cup has always been an interesting exercise in national identity for the United Kingdom, with team loyalties failing to match nation-state boundaries. The interest generated by Thursday's draw stands in stark contrast to yesterday's piece of internationalist symbolism at Waterloo station, where Robin Cook unveiled the logo for Britain's presidency of the European Union (although it is worth noting in passing the lack of English nationalist outrage at the way in which the EU is acting as a single country in the Kyoto climate talks in Japan).

As the World Cup progresses, the cause of internationalism is advanced. We will become interested in the history, geography and society of Cameroon (Group B), Paraguay (D), South Korea (E), Jamaica and Croatia (H). With the end of the Cold War, and the receding of the threat of a hot war of mass destruction, football is now the strongest incentive to find out about the rest of the world and seek to understand it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Welfare for women

Sir: It is nonsense to suggest that the Government wants to revert to a regime where women are treated as virtual chattels of their husbands, or to embark on a massive transfer of resources from women to men ("Women lose up to £10bn under Labour*, 1 December).

The Government is committed to modernising the tax and benefit system so that it boosts family income through work. We believe this is the best way to relieve poverty and strengthen family and community life, from which women as well as men will gain.

Diane Covle writes that "In three-fifths of eligible families that [the main carner] is the man". In fact, the mother is the three-fifths of families in receipt of Family Credit. So it is likely that the majority of those receiving the tax credit, paid through the pay packet, would

be women. There are a number of options under consideration for the form of the Working Family Tax Credit, including the use of a family income test. This is not the same as ending independent taxation. Such a test aiready applies to Family Credit, where, for a couple, both partners' income is written on the same claim form.

As Gordon Brown made clear last week, the Working Family Tax Credit provides the opportunity for helping working mothers by improving further the support given to low income families for child care. On the same day, he announced enough funds to set up an out-of-school childcare club in every community. This is good news for working mothers and their families. HELEN LIDDELL MP (Airdrie and Shotts, Lab)

London SWT The writer is Economic Secretary to the Treasury

Sir: Whilst reading Patricia Hollis's informative new biography of Jennie Lec I was struck by some remarkable similarities with the current furore over Harriet Harman's attack on the benefits of lone parents, the vast majority of them women.

In 1931 the Labour government faced a mounting bill for henefits, caused by rising unemployment. Chancellor Philip Snowden insisted on financial orthodoxy and so the government decided to cut benefits to married women. The measure was defended in the Commons by Margaret Bondfield, a Cabinct minster who had built her career in the Labour Party through the women's trade

union movement. The proposal was bitterly attacked in the House by Jennie Lee and other women Labour MPs such as Eleanor Rathbone, Ellen Wilkinson and Cynthia Mosley. Not a single woman joined Margaret Bondfield in the lobby but the measure was voted through by the massed ranks of Labour backbenchers whom Jeninie Lee later described as reacting on every occasion "like a load of wet cement. They would see nothing, do nothing, listen to nothing that had not first been viven the seal of [Ramsay] Macdonald's approval".

Then there was just a handful of women Labour MPs, whereas now there are a hundred. I wonder how they will fare when put to a test of principle compared with their predecessors of sixty years ago. MICHAEL HERBERT Mossley, Lancashire

Sir: The Government should do emerges from this work is that with babies work, 40 to 45 per sole or main wage earner in cent of mothers of 15 and 16year-olds, and three out of four are 16-plus, have jobs. Workshy, or putting the emotional needs of the child first?

> our very poorest children? YVONNE ROBERTS London SW12

Museum charges

Sir: You are right that the key issue for museums is access, but it is nonsense to claim that new museum buildings are some sort of extravagance (report, 1 December). The reality is that museums and galleries have been starved of both capital and revenue funding for decades. New and refurbished buildings are desperately needed precisely to preserve and provide full and proper access by the public to their existing collections.

Both the backlog of outstanding work and the opportunities for new forms of access such as this museum's plans for a branch in the north of England, are enormous. For most the absence of adequate fiscal support and, realistically, any future prospect of it, means that the Lottery is the only major source of capital and, for many, admission charges are necessarily a crucial source of oper-

ating income. Thus, Norman Foster's American Air Museum at the Imperial War Museum's Dux- rector of the Victoria and ford Airfield branch in Cambridgeshire has both assured the permanent preservation of a fine collection and encouraged a 50 per cent increase in attendance since its opening. Its running casts will be covered by the revenue provided by these additional visitors and nourish improved access for other collections. Duxford Airfield first to a bank balance. opened in 1976. It now has some 400,000 visitors a year but it simply would not exist and could not have been developed as it has without the income from charges. The same applies to the museum's other branches, the Cabinet War Rooms and HMS Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Belfast, and to much of the re-

its homework. Research commissioned by the previous Conservative government, and conducted by the Policy Studies Institute, has tracked 900 lone parents since 1991 and interviewed 3,600 others. What while only one in eight women lone mothers with children who

Social exclusion can be tackled -- but not by name-calling and a reliance on simplistic solutions to highly complex problems. And certainly not by docking £11.50 from new lone parentswhy punish the many who are trying so very hard and why further restrict the lives of some of

Badgers and TB

Sir. Again, outbreaks of bovine TB are, understandably, causing concern to farmers. ("Badgers get blame for epidemic", 1 December)

Human TB has been largely conquered in Britain by better housing and nutrition. The Richards report (1972) by the Ministry of Agriculture on the outbreak of bovine TB in West Cornwall suggested that bad husbandry and management of cattle herds was a major cause.

Then the bacillus was found in a badger carcass and the efforts of the ministry and the Na-

cent improvement of our Lam-

beth Road headquarters. The

truth therefore is that, in our

case at least, charges and the

Lottery have together substan-

tially extended access to public

Sir: Dr Alan Borg is scarcely in

a position to complain about

extra state funding for the

British Museum (report, 3 De-

cember). In the past, the di-

Albert Museum has taken an

unapologetically elitist posi-

tion, even indicating at one

point that he had no objection

to a £10 entry fee since what

mattered was the quality, not

the quantity, of visitors - which

rather implies that he sees

quality of mind as something

which rises in direct proportion

JILL BENNETT

ROBERT CRAWFORD

Imperial War Museum

Director General

London SE1

tional Farmers Union were concentrated on the culling of hadgers and other possible causes were largely ignored.

Despite twenty-five years of badger culling, bovine tuberculosis is still rife

Dairy cattle are no longer fed on herb-rich grassland but on grass monocultures, and their diet is supplemented by manufactured protein-rich foods to boost milk yield. They are confined for long periods, in close proximity, in milking sheds and in winter housing. This must lead to the spread of the disease between individuals.

Selection of breeding stock takes account, almost exclusively, of milk yield. Natural im- Sir: One hardly needs to ask if Brighton

programmes has cost many millions of pounds and destroyed more than 25,000 badgers, and

the disease is still rife. It is to be hoped that the Krebs report, now with the minister, will soon be released and that, for the sake of farmers and the dairy industry, it will deal with the scientific evidence rather than political considerations. J K WILLIAMS Cambome

munity to disease is disregarded. members of the National Fed- East Susser

likely time interval. The arrival

rather like London buses. No:

one knows when the next alien

exterminator will arrive. All we

know is that, sooner or later, ar-

Heroes and villains

Sir: I must take issue with Robert

Fisk's assertion (3 December)

that the Crusades were "the

greatest act of ethnic cleansing

and barbarism in the Middle

East in a thousand years". In

point of fact they were episodes

in the "long war" between Islam

with the Arab / Islamic conquest

of much of the Mediterranean

World in the seventh century,

and ended with the defeat of the

the walls of Vienna at the end

of the 17th century. For much

of that period, Christendom

was on the defensive against tri-

umphalist and proselytising Is-

rive it certainly will.

PETER BOND

Cranleigh, Surrey

Twenty-five years of culling eration of Badger Groups would welcome into their families a person spreading TB. but astonishingly they demand that dairy and beef farmers should accept the equivalent of that in their livestock herds, where TB-infected badgers are proved to be present on

Photograph: BBC

The need for food to be free of the infection and the welfare of those who work very hard producing it appears to be shaded out of the picture by impractical sentimentality. J B DWANE

ed to happen on average once were capable of heroism and barbarity in equal measure.

Space invaders every 100 million years, it does not mean that this is the most

Sir: The threat to Earth from a devastating asteroid impact has somehow been both overestimated and underestimated in Charles Arthur's article about the Chicxulub crater ("Asteroid that killed dinosaurs will strike again – in 35 million years", 4 December).

He states that the size of the object which excavated Chicxulub was 100km across. In fact. it is the new estimation of the crater's diameter which has been downsized to 100km, from 180km. Most authorities agree that the object which struck the Yucatan and probably wiped out the dinosaurs was less than 10km across.

Fortunately for us, 100kmdiameter asteroids are very rare. They may have been present in large numbers during the Earth's formation, but there are probably only a few dozen in our Solar System at the present time. On the other hand, just be-

cause an event may be expect-

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.

of two spectacular comets in our skies in the past two years is ev-Parliamentary oath idence that celestial objects have their own timetables,

Sir: Your leading article on Sinn Fein and the parliamentary oath (5 December) misses the point: their refusal is based upon a rejection of the sovereignty of the British government whether or not this is symbolised in the monarch.

However, your suggestion of an oath to pursue "liberty and iustice for all" might be practical; Sinn Fein probably believe that this is what they have always been doing. GERARD M BLAIR West Linton, Peebleshire

Taking liberties

and Christendom which started Sir: How can the Government deny the freedom of the individual to choose between the infinitesimal risk of infection and the primal pleasure to be de-Ottoman / Islamic army before rived from eating beef on the bone, whilst refusing to countenance a ban on cigarettes? Is this a question of excise duty or civil liberty? MARK EVANS lamic powers - and both sides London W7

THE EDITOR

LETTER FROM

Alert! BSE in bones shock ... and what do the good people of Britain do? They pour out to the butchers and stock up on ribs. T-bone steaks, and so on. Why is this so pleasing? Partly, perhaps, because of the two-fingers-to-officialdom that it represents. Week by week, we get more and more information on possible health threats - on yesterday's front page, for example, we reported on gelatine. It is the job of government to tell us, and help us find our way through the maze of conflicting scientific evidence. Free and obiective information, uncluttered by commercial interests, is a new ers (notably the London

human right. But it isn't the role of govment then to force change our behaviour. That kind of thinking is statist impertinence. In the case of beef. anyone who cares to buy a newspaper knows almost as much about the likely risks as any expert. Most of us are able to come to a personal decision about whether the enjoyment of certain steaks is outweighed by the anxiety about the horrible death coming if you get CJD. So why the bans? Presumably because ministers think that otherwise they, and not the consumer, might be held responsible for any deaths. But again, why? We don't ban cigarettes, motor-scooters or Japanese whisky.

Mind you, where I think the Government could help is with risk-assessment education. Most of us find it exceptionally hard to separate our vivid apprehension of a particular fate - being attacked by sharks, or dying of lung cancer - from the mathematical likelihood of it happening. Were we properly conscious of risks and odds, it would have more effect on our behaviour than any health education programme. On the other hand, it would also mean that far fewer of us would play the National Lottery.

Do newspapers matter? We have had two small victories to chalk on the fuselage this week. I think.

First, the decision of Lord Chadlington to resign as chairman of the Royal Opera House, an honourable and personal one, was only taken after the Department of Culture had absorbed the views of this, and several other newspapers, and decided that his position was difficult to sustain.

Second, the small change of heart on the subject of museum charges would certainly not have happened had we, and oth-Evening Standard) not banged on angrily about it, publishing But that issue, in particular, is not fully resolved. A national campaign to preserve and extend free gallery and museum access is urgently required.

Apologies corner. It was a ghastly mistake, made worse by the fact that it has happened &. once before. In an early edition of vesterday's paper, Thursday's letters were repeated. The mistake was spotted quickly and corrected, but that doesn't make it better for those of you who got the early edition. Last time round, someone rather charmingly wrote in pointing it out, and concluding: If you are short of material, please feel free to use this letter more than once."

It's no joking matter, though. I owe you an explanation. The explanation is that the person editing the letters gave them the wrong computer catchline. They were then pulled on to the page, at which point our entire computer system crashed. Panic. By the time we looked at paper copies of the pages hurriedly sent to the print sites, it was too late. We have a system to stop it happening but two people messed up. They are very sorry. So am I.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

Labour promised more openness in government. They have proved as open as a locked safe when it comes to finding out what interests ministers enjoy and how they have handled them to avoid conflicts" - John Redwood, shadow Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

"Although the Teletubbies are unquestionably the greatest proof of Britain's creative genius since Shakespeare, they do not provide role models, as William Hague is beginning to discover" - Auberon Waugh

When the official papers are released in 30 years, we will know the truth about Humphrey the Downing Street cat. We may see a vet's bill for the humane dispatch of a cat to his moggy heaven" - Terry Major-Ball

"Why not roast cat for Christmas? It was once fashionable" - Steve Jones. Professor of Genetics at University College London, referring to an 1875 article entitled "Eating Cats at West

"Showbiz is full of decadence, which I enjoy" - Catherine

"We used to refer to natural disasters as acts of God. Now it clear that we humans are at least partly responsible. We a taking a reckless gamble with the future of our planet" - Lichael Meacher, environment minister

مكتاب الدعل

DAVID **AARONOVITCH** REUNION BLUES

On Thursday, as the whole of Britain knows, the Prince of Wales was reunited with an old school chum. Over the years since they had constituted, in 1957, onesixth of the class at Hill House Preparatory School, life had treated them surprisingly similarly. Both had suffered the emotional trauma of broken marriages and divorce. both had not handled this upset particularly well. The major difference between Clive Harold and Prince Charles, was that the latter has not really gone anywhere not moved on. Forty years ago he was heir to the throne, and heir to the throne he

Mr Harold, on the other hand, had led a far more eventful life. Originally a financier's son, he had become a journalist, an author, had brokered film deals with Svivester Stallone, caten lotus leaves in Elysium, and - following his divorce - hit the bottle. "One morning," he said, "I woke up in a shop doorway in the Strand. I had lost everything." It was in his capacity as a seller of the Big Issue that Mr Harold encountered the Prince once more, in the magazine's London offices.

Remarkably, he recognised the Prince at once, but realised that he himself might not be so memorable. "Don't suppose you remember me," he said, "but we were at school together." To Charles's great credit he did not do what I would have done, and look at the man beneath the grubby Santa's hat closely, before saying, "The face is certainly familiar, is it Colin? No, er, Alan? Help me out here. Perhaps if you removed the hat?" Instead he confessed immediately that he had no idea who Mr Harold was.

It was a tricky moment for both of them. and one the possibility of which haunts most of us in some way. This was, statistically, practically a class reunion, happening after 40 years. Left to themselves they both might have preferred to avoid it.

But, in fact, possibly fuelled by American yuppy nostalgia movies, reunion is catching on in this country. Local and re-

gional papers carry ads and letters seeking to contact all those from Dotheboys High School, circa 1971, with the objective of bringing together those who once showered, shouted and shat in the same place at the same time.

When I mention this trend to friends, and ask them whether they would attend such a function, I get two reactions. The more positive one goes something like this: 'Yeah, I'd go. I've got a good job, nice kids, me boobs haven't sagged. I'll stand comparison. And it'd be intriguing to see who they've married, how many are divorced, and how are the mighty fallen." This is the reunion as Schadenfreude.

The more negative reaction is also my own. It consists of a mixture of fear and an almost journalistic curiosity. When meeting someone for the first time in many years. I am always fascinated to see the youngster still peeping out from behind the mask of age, like a famous actor made up to look old. The eyes somehow stay young, so that - mentally - you add hair to the boy and smooth the wrinkles away from the girl. Remove the wattles and warts, and there they still are. Nor does it bother me that I am not as svelte as I was. Frankly I wasn't that good looking a teenager either.

I am scared by the possibility of inescapable boredom. After all, who wouldn't be there? The larky ones, who smoked dope, played guitars and went into films; the adventurous ones who ended up as headmasters of schools in Fiji and Tristan da Cunha; the mobile, restless ones, whose tales one would love to hear. They wouldn't be there.

And who would? The pushy merchant banker who, as a boy, wished the Americans would bomb North Vietnam a little more; the repressed nerd to whom you showed your knob at 12, who still gave you funny looks at 18, and who would give you funny looks again at 40; the corporate lawyer, who hoarded the Economics A-level texts from the library in his own desk, so that no-one else could use them, and really couldn't understand why you hated him; the prop forward from the second XV with the BO and inexhaustible supply of bad jokes, who has never moved away from the old school.

But the biggest deterrent of all - the one that has caused me to refuse all invitations to reune, is when I imagine standing alone before that school door, stripped of everything that I have done and decided in adulthood to be, all my clever reinventions suddenly deinvented by people for whom I will always remain the same, and in whose interests it is that I never change.

And there is one last thing. The painful and shameful truth is that I don't even see the people I most want to see; those who I am too embarrassed to call because I have left it too long, those to whom - year after year - I forget to send a Christmas card: those whose company I ache for. Given that, why would I spend time with a whole bunch of ancient schvuntzes I never liked in the first place? I might buy the Big Issue from them - or even, if things go badly -

Don't worry, Rachel - you can get it



TREVOR PHILLIPS POLITICIANS AND SCIENCE

If you don't know who Rachel from Friends is, skip to the next bit, or better still return to the cave in which you've been living for three years. Your contact with the modern world is clearly tenuous. However, most of us have seen the TV commercial in which Rachel gives you that just-washed-anddried-my-hair-and-oh-how-gloriously-shiny-it-is look. After a bit of flirting with us, she turns direct to camera and says sternly "Now pay attention. Here comes the science bit." Rachel clearly basn't a clue what the science bit is about, but it doesn't matter; having gazed deep into her eyes, who could care less about the effect of some unpronounceable chemical on those glorious follicles? We just take it for granted that the science guys are telling us the truth, and the little cartoon molecules really are making each individual hair smoother, silkier, stronger; after all that's what science is about - precision, certainty, uncontestable fact. And no doubt the company's men in white coats have been testing individual hairs to destruction for years, so they must know it to be true.

The essence of scientific method is indeed the experiment. But the point of the experiment is not to discover anything. It is purely to show that we can predict what will happen in any given situation from a theoretical framework; in short to confirm what our creative imagination tells us to product we'll end up looking like Rachel. Or so the story goes. But science can never be certain; it can tell you what will hundred, or 999,999 out of a million, but there are few anyone can say are 100 per cent

The problem is that politicians aren't bookies. They only



Rachel from 'Friends' (Jenifer Aniston) flashes her shampoo commercial for L'Oreal

Look mom.

want sure things. But when it comes to risks that involve the possible death of - let's say - a child, few scientists want to be too categorical, for very good reasons. There are reputations to protect, critics to outflank, big research grants to justify acutely important in these lean times. Yet the public craves certainty; we may have no idea what needs to be done; indeed we may not have a clue what the problem really is, but we demand decisive action, whether appropriate or not. Dr John week to the temptation to say, "Here comes the science bit" ban on beef products on the ba-

Cunningham succumbed this when he imposed yet another sis of "new scientific evidence". He defended his decision in exactly the same terms as Rachel uses; the scientists told me what to say, so it must be true. What Cunningham's case comes down be true. So if we use Rachel's to is that the only thing we can be sure about is that - now, pay attention, please - we can't be sure about anything; therefore, to be absolutely sure, we happen 909 times out of a shouldn't have anything to do with bone products.

> Let us leave for the moment the question of the millions of be safe than sorry; I tend to tons of bonemeal in gardens all over England, no doubt picked up by assorted pets, and focus up the choice? on the decision itself. Why

should we be more restrictive because we don't know everything about this particular risk? We do know that the risk of any individual catching CID is almost certainly tiny, compared to the risk involved in the use of the contraceptive pill for example; a random failure of the pill can lead to extreme distress for an entire family, even to a loss of life.

Politicians caught in the mesmerising headlights of expert testimony go gooey and stupid. Over the past decade or two, the scientific evidence on the rise in the planets temperature and levels of pollution has not been fulfilled; in fact the problem is less than half as bad as the last world conference on pollution suggested it might be. That's not to say that we should ignore it; it is simply to point out that the demand for scientists to simplify everything has allowed some of the worst polluters - the old Soviet Union, for example - to get off the hook in Kyoto this week. Yet huge and expensive plans have been made on the basis of contested "scientific" evidence. You may say that its better to agree - but has the public genuinely known enough to weigh

Our collective failure to

gratulating dog-owners, while

their dog was in the act. saying

'at least it gives work to young

Mr Midol says that he is pre-

occupied with the issue, partly

as a concerned citizen, but

partly because he sees it as a

paradigm for the ills of France:

an unresolved battle between

two sides of the great triangle

of French values, a struggle be-

tween liberte and fraternite.

sums in wasted public money. No-one should be against fundamental scientific research. Even Lady Thatcher, the scourge of public spending. was forced to point out that had Michael Faraday's pioneering physics been patented by for the benefit of the nation, the portfolio would be worth rather more than the value of the London Stock Exchange. But do we apply the standards of accountability we apply elsewhere in the spending of public money? In the US, scientists were £3bn into the construction of a \$10bn super-collider facility – you use it to find evidence of exotic subatomic particles before they worked out it was useless. The money went straight down the drain. Heaven alone knows how much dis-

At the heart of this problem is the simple fact that most of us are scientifically illiterate. With few exceptions - the BBC and the Royal Society for the with the fact that the dominant

appears in failed attempts at

new military or intelligence-

gathering technology about

which we are not allowed to

forces in our world at the end of the twentieth century are science and technology. Just as during the 1960s, government had to make a concerted effort to get the people to grasp the true meaning of the Cold War, and in the 1980s, Thatcher and Reagan transformed the world by giving economics a popular language, we now need our leaders to offer us a way of understanding advances in sci-

This does not mean we must all agree about everything: bringing science into public life does not mean the end of polities, to be replaced by some technocratic consensus. On the contrary, it is only a sound knowledge of the language of science itself that will give us the tools with which to conduct the most passionate arguments of our time properly, rather than in a sort of broad-brush, sloppy. Moral Maze kind of way. Without the right sort of debate we will continue to talk about the problems of the twenty-first century in the phrases of the nineteenth. If only, one day, instead of turning her back during the science bit. Rachel for example - there is very lit- and murmur, "Now let me tell the effort applied to force the you about this really sexy ke-British people to come to terms—tone molecule 1 picked up last

Liberté versus fraternité: a dispatch from the French dog-poo wars



JOHN LICHFIELD THE STREETS OF PARIS

Jean Tiberi, successor to Jacques Chirac as Mayor of Paris, is generally held, by friends and foes, to have been a failure. He has, however, won my sympathy and potential affection. He has promised, not before time, to address one of the greatest social scourges of the world's most heautiful city: dog-poo.

I have written about this before and make no apology for doing so again. Paris has a serious dog problem. It has, proportionally, more dogs -300,000, or one for every seven humans - than any other city. Other places take aggressive steps to early dogs. Paris has long adopted a policy of, so-to-

speak, luissez-faire. On one occasion I counted 18 dog deposits - the French phrase is "crottes de chien" - in the first 30 yards of my walk to work. This may be merely ancedotal (the canine population of our street seems particularly high), but the official statistics

are equally damning. Dogs leave 20 tons of shit on the streets of Paris daily (who has weighed it, you ask?). An average of 650 people a year are hurt so badly after slipping on dog-poo in Paris that they have to be taken to hospital. This works out at nearly two victims each day; broken collar bones are the most frequent injury. Complaints about dog-dirt are the third most frequent reason for letter-writing to the Paris town hall (ahead of fear of crime). And yet convictions of dog owners for "uncivic behaviour" (fine £100) are running at less than two a week.

Over the years, committees have been formed by the town hall to examine the problem, scientific studies have been ordered, and information campaigns have been aimed at dog-owners, urging them at least to make their dogs defecate in the gutter. Any suggestion that the law should be rigorously applied was blocked by the former mayor, who said such "repression" would not work and would penalise the

old and the poor. The old mayor, now of course the President of the Republic, used to lecture petfood manufacturers on the need to invent products that would lead to drier and less offensive dog-poo. In other words, he did everything but address the real cause of the problem: the callous indiscipline of dog-owners. "As far as the politicians who run this city is concerned, there is a potential voter behind each pile of dog-shit, says André Midol. one of the most tireless Parisian campaigners for clean pave-



On his 'Chieraclette': picking up after the dogs of Paris

Until now, under Chirac's influence, the City of Paris has developed the most elaborate and costly systems of cure Parisians as "Chieraclettes". rather than prevention. The city

pays from a year to a private company, Trottoirs Nets, to cleanse the streets of dog-poo-(it is this company which has estimated the daily harvest from Parisian dogs). The company operates a fleet of more than 100 bright-green machines, like motor-bikes with carpet-cleaners bolted to the back, called "caninettes" or "motocrottes". The last time I wrote on this subject, a reader wrote in to point out that they also had another nickname, an inspired triple out on the name of the former mayor and the words

chier (to shit) and raclette (scraper). Thus the machines are referred to by some

Operated by young people with unconvincingly impassive expressions, their task is to scour the most commonly afflicted pavements once or twice a day. They make their rounds just after the morning rush-hour and just after the late film on the television. Experience has shown that this is when owners and dogs most frequently resort

to the streets. The new mayor, Mr Tiberi, has finally promised to (so to speak) step in. He has appointed 15 "canine counsellors" to educate dog-owners. But he also says it is time for "extreme" even heard passers-by con-

measures". In other words, he has asked the Paris police chief to enforce the law against fouling the pavements. More summonses will be issued to dog-owners but they will have the option, on a first offence, to attend cleanliness training

classes organised by the Town

Photograph: Pex/Cipa

Mr Midol, the foremost Parisian anti dog-diri campaigner, is also a sociological expert who advises companies and local authorities on group behaviour. He says Tiberi's initiative may be fine, if he means it. But the real problem is that the city "legitimises" the offenders by spending so much money on cleaning up, "I've

Outsiders tend to think of the French as an over-gov-

people'."

erned people who often place the rights of the state - of the collectivity - above those of the individual. The truth is more muddled, says Mr Midol. The French tend to have a teenaged view of the state: they strenuously assert a right to personal freedom, but believe that it is someone else's duty to clean up after them.

"In terms of anti-social bebaviour, of recognising that certain kinds of individual freedom amount to irresponsibility - whether it's going through red traffic lights or striking for the least reason - we have a serious problem in France. There is not the sense that you find in some other countries that individuals owe some kind of duty to society to make daily life tolerable. There is a sense, instead, that it's up to the state

to look after these things ..." Mr Midol has two small children. He says he that, like all Parisian parents, has taught them to walk like Parisians, not like tourists. "When we go into town, I don't say to them, 'look how beautiful the streets are', or 'look at the wonderful shop window'. I say, 'look down and look ahead or you will stand in

"If I couldn't come here at Christmas, I don't know where I'd go"



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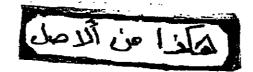
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Guido Brunner, diplomat and politician: born Madrid 27 May 1930; European Commissioner 1974-80; Senator for the Economy, West Germany 1981; German ambassador in Madrid 1982-92; married 1958 Dr Christa Speidel; died Madrid 2 December 1997.

Guido Brunner was one of the unsung architects of the Europe we have today. Had it not been of Commissioner Brunner, the project (Jet) would not have been sited at Culham in Oxfordshire, or come to the United Kingdom at all.

Over two years of endless wrangling in the mid-1970s, Brunner clung to the belief that Jet should go to wheresoever it had the greatest chance of scientific success, and that good manners in public life, yet meant Britain or Germany. As a German, he bravely told his fellow compatriots, and in particular his fellow German Commissioner, the powerful and Parliamentary Secretary, asked raucous Vice-President Willi Haferkampf, and the French find Guido Brunner in the Euchairman of the Commission, ropean Parliament? It's a joy to François-Xavier Ortoli, that it was Britain's turn to host a major European scientific initiative. I had intimate first-hand knowledge of the debate, as one of the two British Labour members of the indirectly elected European Parliament Science and som of the European family. Energy Committee in 1976-79.

Even if the hopes of the 1970s that fusion would open up bassador in Madrid for a whole a new and virtually inex- crucial decade, 1982-92, and behaustible supply of energy for came the intimate confidant of the 21st century have not been fulfilled, it in no way diminishes the importance of Brunner's ish politicians determined to persuasive powers or the sig- return to democracy.

nificance of his contribution to the European ideal, by championing the choice of a country other than his own, when his own country was the realistic rival choice.

ner, a free-marketeer by conviction, was helpful to Britain and its Labour ministers. One business, the then Energy Minister, Tony Benn, recalls: "I last saw him by chance in the for the goodwill towards Britain street in Madrid. He was passionately committed to the Eu-EEC thermo-nuclear fusion ropean ideal; I'm not. He was passionately committed to nuclear power; I'm not. And yet, as opposites, we worked constructively and well together and parted, as we always had been when we were both in office, the best of friends."

Like Benn, Brunner had some of the most impeccably without a trace of smarminess. Another minister, the late John Smith MP, later to be leader of the Labour Party, then Benn's me at the time: "How do you work with him when I go to ministerial meetings in Brussels."

Yet the greatest cause of Brunner's life was not the development of a European technological community but the easing of Spain back into the bo-Brunner was the German am-Felipe González and held the proverbial hand of many Span-

Indeed, Madrid was the city his death. Nothing in life gave him greater pleasure than to be made an honorary citizen of Madrid. His father, from a In many other areas Brun-Bavarian family, and his mother, from a Swabian family, represented the Weimar Republic in Spain; Brunner senior's caof those, with whom he had per- reer was to founder through behaps the greatest volume of coming persona non grata to Joachim von Ribbentrop, although he was protected for a time by his patron Franz von

> fore Hitler. Brunner was educated partly at the Bergzabern School in Munich and at the German School in Madrid during the Second World War. Joining the Diplomatic Service in 1955, his first job was as Consular Attaché in Liverpool ~ a city for which he retained a lifelong affection on account of the warmth of the people of Liverpool to a young German in his late twenties.

> Papen, the German Chancellor

In 1976, I asked Brunner to come and stay over a weekend in Scotland. At a meeting of the West Lothian Labour Party over a subsequent supper, one of my more assertive and voluble constituents started a harangue on what he believed to be the unparalleled excellence of the Scottish football game. Brunner could take no more of this and quietly opined that he thought that a Mr Beckinbauer and a Mr Overath also knew, as Ambassadors come and go but he put it, how to kick a ball. It s done so gently, encapsulating Brunner's style, that even my loud-mouthed friend had to

solve in laughter. It then transpired that Brunner had an encyclopaedic knowledge of British football in the late 1950s. A Liverpool sup-

porter? Oh no, eternally loyal to of his birth and to be the city of Everton - and Bayern Munich and Real Madrid. Like a very different character, his friend and austere fellow commissioner, the Dane Finn-Olaf Gundelach who came to a meeting a few weeks later, he was a huge success, winning the hearts of tough local trade-unionists.

> returned to the foreign minister's office where he was lucky to work for the Foreign Minister, Dr Heinrich von Brentano. who was to further his career. From 1960 to 1968 he was given the very important post of German observer to the United Nations in New York. An observer might on the surface have seemed to be a somewhat humble post, but actually it was of crucial importance.

Promoted to become Head of Scientific and Technological Relations Division of the Foreign Office for two years, subsequently Foreign Office spokesman between 1970 and 1972 and Head of the Planning Staff from 1972 to 1974, Brunner was qualified with the rank of ambassador and Head of Delegation to lead the German team to the security and co-operation conferences in Europe. at Helsinki and Geneva.

This made him an obvious choice to become the second German Commissioner in the European Community. He was given, on account of his experience, the important portfolio of energy, research, science and education. He was so highly thought of by the British Commissioner, George Thomson, now Lord Thomson of Monifieth, that as Chancellor of the Heriot-Watt University he initiated an honorary degree for civilisation.

Brunner.

Present at the ceremony. I heard the economic historian and politician Professor Alan Thompson, then the University Public Orator, say to Brunner as he presented it:

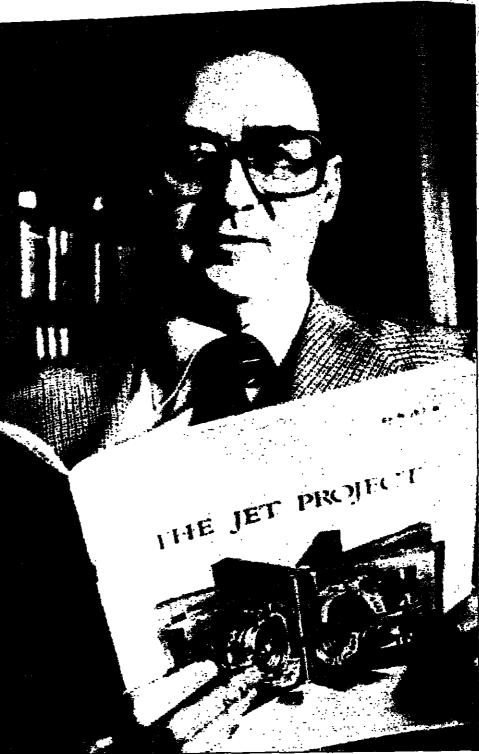
Dr Brunner has given authoritative and imaginative leadership over a wide range of research activities. He has shown special interest in industrial research into small and medium After Liverpool, Brunner sized industries, which, in spite of the growth of multi-national comies, still make a vital contribution

to European prosperity.

Like the famous economist Dr Ernst Schumacher, he believes that small can be beautiful, and there is nothing immical between the growth of large-scale markets such as Europe offers, and the preservation of that initiative and enterprise which small business can provide. In Britain par-ticularly, the small firm sector can make a decisive contribution to employment and exports once the shackles of over-taxation and overregulation are removed and Dr Brunner's own interest in this field are widely known.

One of Brunner's interests was medical research and he gave the greatest help to the late Professor John Kendrew in the establishment of the European Molecular Biology Centre in Karlsruhe. Three particular interests where the study of congenital abnormalities - a field in which compassion for the distress of malformed children can be given practical effect through new research techniques; new studies in the physiological processes of ageing, and the development of new types of heart-lung machines, capable of prolonged oxygenation.

With his wife, Dr Christa Brunner, the daughter of General Hans Speidel, a celebrated post-war German military leader, Brunner was a distinguished figure in re-establishing Germany at the forefront of



- Tam Dalyell Brunner: a free-marketeer by conviction

Photograph: Popperfoto

Vodafone at

David Toguri

David Megumi Toguri, director, choreographer dancer: born Toronto 25 October 1933; died Toronto 15 November 1997.

There was perhaps no "Toguri ie in the tracemank of the great trio of the post-war American director/choreographers Gower Champion, Bob Fosse (Toguri especially admired the "Fosse touch") and Michael Bennett - but David Toguri did not have in Britain Toguri: ebullient the quality of new material that they could develop in the United States, while the 1980s' of their weakest shows musically emergence of the British megamusical laid more emphasis on spectacular scenery than on first Broadway musical, to exchoreography. For Toguri in ploit in the choreography suany event the material and the performer dictated the actual steps; nothing was ever put in to Pyjama Game). show off or to flourish his particular signature.

I suspect he learnt something of this self-effacement at the Palace Theatre, executing some feet of an acknowledged hero, muscular routines with an exu-Gene Kelly. Growing up in berant aplomb in marked con-Toronto, where he trained with trast to the more genteel Boris Vorkoff, he had his first English choreography (mostly



stein's Flower Drum Song, one but with enough exotic opportunities for Kelly, directing his pervised by Carol Haney (who had starred for Bob Fosse in The

Toguri made his West End début when he came to London with the show in 1960 at the break in Rodgers and Hammer- still trapped in what George

as "skirt dancing") of the period. Deciding to settle in the UK he was quickly in demand and his witty, elegantly economical style found an ideal showcase in the offbeat revne Chaganog, insubsequently at the Vaudeville in 1964.

In 1965 he opened in Charlie Girl, one of those ineptly formulaic British musicals which would close in six weeks today but which then could survive dreadful reviews to run for years at the Adelphi on the strength of its star, Anna Neagle, and hustling promotion by its impresario, Harold Fielding. As John Sasaki, a Japanese houseboy, Toguri's main contribution was to partner Anna Neagle in the show's equivalent of a Broadway "eleven o'clock number", a Charleston routine which built to a frenetic climax, providing the only moments of real class in the evening and in which Toguri made Neagle (whose best dancing days were behind her) look as good as any

Broadway star. Charlie Girl - in which, out

Bernard Shaw used to describe of affection for Anna Neagle, he remained for three years - crystallised his choreographic ambitions and for 30 years as choreographer and increasing-

> he worked regularly in the theatre or the opera bouse is eloquent testimony to his talent -Trevor Nunn, for whom he choreographed on The Baker's Wife and Measure for Measure as well as on recreating the smoky Weimar world of The Blue Angel; Peter Wood, on many National Theatre productions (his work on The Threepenny Opera and The Beggar's Opera was particularly memorable); Jim Sharman - the sexy and often hilarious routines in The Rocky Horror Show were Toguri creations on stage and on film; David Pountney - a haunting Kurt Weili Street Scene for ENO; Keith Warner - Sondheim's Pacific Overtures, with a stunning Toguri-staged finale as Japan moved into the technological age,

umphant Eyre production of Guys and Dolls at the National in 1982 (winning the SOLT Best Choreography Award). ly also as director his career providing exhilarating and dyspanned an extraordinary range namic musical staging throughcorporating dance and mime, at of work which nobody else in his out (his Crapshooters' Ballet ns the hest staging of

As a choreographer, the list his career). He directed and of leading directors with whom choreographed the show in Australia in 1986 and returned vival of the Bernstein/Comden to the National production for and Green Wonderful Town! at its 1996 revival, which was playing its final performances at the time of his death. For television his most outstanding work was the Rock

Follies series, while his movies took in Memphis Belle, 4bsolute Beginners (in which his electric jive numbers jolted the film into occasional life) and Who Framed Roper Rubbit? He was also in constant demand for video work, about which he was extremely selective - he staged David Bowie's Blue Jeans, Freddie Mercury's A Crazy Little Thing Called Love and, most memorably, Tina Turner's sizzling Break Every Rule. He never stopped enjoying working with and six Brazilian sailors. the young and inexperienced; he also for ENO; and Richard Eyre. became a valuable mainstay of on the 1974 Mermaid Theatre mantic duet with the late Ken-

He choreographed the tri- both the National Youth Theatre show Cole, which demanded of and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

> coaxing actors inexperienced in choreography ("I can't dance Madam in "Come On In", pulbut I can move a bit " as they sating tan-routines ("Anything usually tend to put it) into often astonishing feats. On the re-Watford and then at the Oueen's Theatre, he preserved all the genuine charm of an essentially small-scale show but also devised some superb set pieces, integrating them seamlessly into the fabric of the characters and the story. He worked brilliantly with Maureen Lipman (playing Ruth Sherwood, the self-deprecating loser in love in 1930s Greenwich Village) so that her physical idiosyncrasies became those of the character and the funny, unusual steps seemed invented on the wing - especially in a genuinely spirit-lifting Conga routine involving a radiant Lipman

I first collaborated with him

him a whole gallery of choreographic styles from different pe-He always worked to the riods - the steamy Bowery waltz of "Brush Up Your Shakestrengths of his performers and had a particularly rare talent for speare", a burlesque sequence with Julia McKenzie as a louche Goes") and, in "Leader of a Big-

Time Band", a whirlwind jit-

terbug for the youngest couple

in the company which I asked

for late in rehearsal and which,

open-mouthed. I watched him stage in just a few minutes at the end of a long day. In Cole he created especially inventive work for Una Stubbs, then at the peak of her dancing career. With the help of the Porter estate, the score of Porter's 1920s jazz ballet Within the Quota was reconstructed and for Stubbs, dressed in the briefest of black and gold shifts and carrying a huge ostrich feather fan, he devised an impudent, teasingly sensual five minutes that had the quality of an Erté drawing come to life.

Also for Una Stubbs, this time in white chiffon, he could turn to creating a dreamily ro-

neth Nelson against a moving cloudscape to the vearning pulse of "Night and Day". His contribution indeed was such that I felt he must have a codirecting rather than a solely choreographic credit; typically of him in a business in ludicrously self-important, be

never requested this for himself. For the past three years, although able to work intermittently, he had to battle with the cancer which killed him. Characteristically for a man whose life away from the heightened ternperature of show-business was 4: calm, quiet and centred round his close family (he was one of eight children and had a whole tribe of adoring nieces and nephews) and friends, it was fought with dignity, humour and grace.

It was impossible to believe that David Toguri was approaching 65; although his hair in recent years had whitened he had, like most former dancers. kept himself in formidable trim and in rebearsal when at his most ebullient (which was most of the time) he often seemed no more than sixteen and a half.

-- Alan Strachan

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births MARKHAGES & DEATHS (Birchs, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, in Memoriam) should be sant in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2012 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2010) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charred at 65.50 a line (V&T). and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announceextra, Officer, (specific amounts-ments (notices, functions, Forthcom-ing marriages, Marriages) must be submitted in writing (or famed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Lectures TODAY

National Gallery: Norman Coady, "Glad Tidings (1): Veronese, The Consecration of Saint Nicholas",

'Snakes and Ladders: artists' fluc tuating reputations", 1pm. British Museum: George Hart, "Ancient Interconnections: Egypt and the Aegean world", 1.15pm. **TOMORROW**

Tate Gallery: Sarah O'Brien Twohig, "Commen late on the 1997 Turner Prize", 4pm. National Portrait Gallery: Paul Webb, "Ivor Novelio", 3pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

Changing of the Guard
TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mouseed Regiment mounts the Oueca's Life Guard at Horse
Guards, I Ilm. TOHORNOW: The Household
Growley Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's
Life Guard at Horse Guards, House, its Battaliou Weish Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at
Barkingham Palace. 11 Shan based mounted to

Birthdays

TODAY: Mrs Janet Anderson MP. TODAY: Mrs Janet Anderson MP, Vice-Chamberlain of HM Household, 48; Lord Ashley of Stoke, former MP, 75; The Right Rev Patrick Barry, Abbot of Ampleforth, 80; Mr Dave Brubeck, jazz musician, 77; Lord Clinton-Davis, Minister of State for Trade, 69; Lord Emslie, former Lord Justice General of Scotland, 78; Miss Jill Hammersley-Parker, table-tennis player, 46; Mr Stephen Hepburn MP, 38; Mr Geoffrey Hoon MP, Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's De-Geoffrey Hoon MP, Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, 44; Sir Maurice Kay, High Court judge, 55; Mr Jonathan King, pup producer, 53; Mrs Helen Liddell MP, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, 47; Sir Richard Lloyd, chairman, Argos pic, 69; Sir Nicholas Lyell QC MP, 59; The Right Rev Professor Eric Mercer, former Bishop of Exeter, 80; Sir Martin Moore-Bick, Fligh Court judge, 51; Mr Eric Newby, writer, 78; judge, 51; Mr Eric Newby, writer, 78; Sir George Philter, gyusecological surgeon, 73; Professor Lord Porter of Luddenham, Chairman of the Cen-tre for Photomolecular Sciences, 77; Mr Keise Rosberg, motor-racing champion, 49; Mr Richard Shepherd MP, 53; Professor Sir Bryan Trwaines, former Principal, Westfield College, 74; Mr Charles Vance, actor, direction tor and producer, 68; The Right Rev Peter Walker, former Bishop of Ely, 78; Mr Cyril Washbrook, cricketer, 83; Mr Peter Willey, cricketer, 48. TOMORROW: Sir Fred Atkinson, economist, 78; Miss Ellen Burstyn, actress, 65; Professor Noam Chom-sky, linguist, 69; Lord Elystan-Say, nights, 67; Lord Erjands, Morgan, circint judge, 65; Mr Kaffe Fassett, textile designer, 60; Profes-sor Sir Abraham Goldberg, physician, 74; Professor Norman Gowar, Principal, Royal Holloway and Beriford New College, 57; Sir Bryan Hopkin, economist, 83; The Countess of Lim-

erick, Chairman Emeritus, British

Red Cross Society, 62; Sir Sydney

Samuelson, first British Film Comsioner, 72; Dr Mario Soares, former President of Portugal, 73; The Rev Rouald Trounson, former Prin-cipal, St Chad's College, Durham, 71; cipal, St Chad's College, Duma Miss Helen Watts, singer, 70.

Anniversaries TODAY: Births: Warren Hastin first Governor-General of India, 1732. Deaths: Anthony Trollope, novelist and Post Office official, 1882. On this novelist and Post Office official, 1832. On this day: the Irish Free State was established, 1922. Today is the Feast Day of St Abraham of Kratia, St Asella, Saints Diouysia, Majoricus and their Companious, St Gestrude the Elder and St Nicholas of Bari. TOMORROW: Birtiss: Gian Locarus Bergini conductor Gian Lorenzo Bernini, sculptor, 1598. Deaths: Robert Ranke Graves, poet, 1985. On this day: the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden (now the Royal Opera House), was opened, 1732. Tornorrow is the Feast Day of St Ambrose of Milan, St Buithe or Boethius, St Entychianus, St Martin of Saujon and St Serves.

Luncheons

Institute of United States Starle Mr Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the American House of Representatives, was the guest of honour at a han-cheon of the Institute of United States Studies in Lincoln's Inn yesterday. Baroness Thatcher, Chairman of the Institute, was in the Chair. Mr Robert Worcester and Lord Rees Mogg also spoke.

ers Club Mr John Major MP was the guest of honour at the Saints and Sinners Christmas Luncheon held yesterday at the Savoy Hotel, London WC2. The Chairman of the Club, Mr my Tarbuck, and the Hon Sec-

FAITH & REASON

Blair's hidden agenda for the Church

Quietly, behind the scenes, New Labour is setting about creating a New Church of England. Andrew Brown predicts major changes.

One of the things about being badly beaten up is that after the first few shocks you don't notice much of what's happening: fresh blows can land and the damage only appears afterwards. So it has taken a while for the Church of England to notice what was done to it last week by the Blair government, and to realise, as it struggles up from a disastrous Synod meeting, that this time

something vital may have been broken.

The man who put his boot into the kidneys was Stuart Bell MP, whose title is one of those grand vacuities that bubble out of the Establishment like cuckoo spit: he is the Second Church Estates Commissioner. The first Church Estates Commissioner is, of but he doesn't matter. For Mr Bell's role, by contrast with his title, is not vac-

sent to govern the grandest and richest parts of the Empire. Mr Bell, in his conversations with the press, has given the impression that he is only a District Commissioner, sent into the bush to dispense justice to a particularly benighted, if colourful, tribe of savages. They are to be brought within the reach of civilisation, and they are to be

Of course, this message is not delivered too crudely to the natives. The Maxim guns stay under wraps, and the casual listener, unversed in bureaucratic language, might think he was merely paying ceremonial obeisance to their customs, not announcing that everything continued on the Government's sufferance.

Last week, he told the General Synod: "The link between Church and State is not, as some might think, obsolete or stagnant, but an evolving and dynamic partnership." So much windy nonsense has been talked about change, modernity, and relevance in the Syncourse, the Archbishop of Canterbury, od that its members can be forgiven for not noticing that this particular rhetoric has a simple, unambiguous English uous at all. He is the Government's pro- translation: "We're going to change consul, sent to govern the Church of everything we feel like changing, and England Perhaps this overestimates his you must like it or lump it. New importance. Proconsuls, after all, were Labour: New Church of England."

The members of the Crown Appoint- and especially the evangelical mafia ments Commission (among them the around Mrs Thatcher and her appoint-Archbishop of Canterbury) know perments secretary. Robin Cattord, or Catfeetly well that the Blair government has food as he was then known in Lambeth turned down both their choices for the Palace, whose pressure was, of course, See of Liverpool, something Mrs exerted more subtly. Thatcher never quite dared do, for all the arrogance of her toadies towards in: the whole process of comfortable, the Church, When Dr Carey was pressed about this in questions, he forgot his script and after preliminary stonewalling finally admitted: "I don't know how the news got out." Thus another illusion of the Church's importance is ended; and it did so with a whimper. If Dr Carey really does not know how the news got out, the answer

In case anyone had missed the significance of this Mr Bell told the press afterwards the Government would continue to intervene in specific appointments of bishops. This is not the affectation of one District Commissioner, operating miles from the central administration: it is the belief of most of the devout and able Christians in this government that most of the Bench of Bishops, from the Archbishops down, have been promoted beyond their abilities, and would never have reached the top in a healthy organisation.

is that it came from Downing Street.

A few were primed to notice this. itself so much as the previous government

So now the Government has stepped creeping disestablishment, which for the last 30 years has looked as if it would lead inevitably to a church which Parliament would not dare to interfere with, firmly established in the possession of its privileges and endowments, has come to a juddering halt. Mr Blair's office will determine who the bishops are. The Church Commissioners will continue to exist, and matter. In exchange, the Church of England is told by Mr Bell that establishment is safe, and that it did a good job in coping with the great outpouring of inarticulate (but scarcely Christian) sentiment over the death of Diana, Princess of Wales - even though privately senior New Labour figures think it reacted

rather pourly It is clearly an offer they can't refuse; but I don't see how they can possibly accept it, either.

Curiously, they don't blame the Church

• 'Faith & Reason' is edited by Paul Vallely

Vodafone at an all-time high as telecoms re-rating continues

MARKET REPORT



CATHY NEWMAN

Dealers' phones were ringing year are looking good, experts dex ended well above the 5000 vesterday after a series of meet-rose 20p to 740p; and NatWest 11p to 107.5p. after Société has been the biggest beneficiary over the past few weeks, and The shares, which floated below the 150p mark, reached another all-time high last night. closing at 403.5p, with more

than 13 million shares traded. Analysis say talk of hid speculation was wide of the mark. Instead, they pointed to an upgrade of cellular stocks one notable - although not, rearound Europe, with Scandinavian companies like Netin favour.

Shares of UK cellular phone bers for the final quarter of the points down after lunch, the in-

for telecoms stocks as the say. Buy notes from Societé wholesale re-rating of the see- Generale and "accumulate" tor continued apace. Vodafone advice from Merrill Lynch also helped the shares along the way.

The numbers came up for yesterday was no exception. Orange too, although the vagaries of the new Sets system played their part here. At one but volume was a fairly light

Most other stocks in the sector were on the rise, with BT adding 1.5p to 475p. There was cently, unusual - exception. lonica prepared to exit the seccom and Europolitan currently ond division as it dropped another 5p to 102.5p.

Footsie had a down and an groups have been lagging be- up day, starting the session in hind their European peers, so negative territory, but ending the recent renaissance seems most definitely positive after a long overdue. Added to that, strong start on Wall Street,

mark again, up 60,6 points at lings with institutional investors. - the perpetual bid target -5142.9.

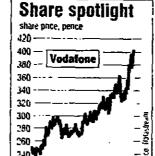
Talk of a bid early next week for Delta, the electric cables and industrial services company, sent the shares up 4.5p to 260.5p. Nearly 770,000 shares were traded, after dealpoint the group shot up 17p, ers speculated that a bidder could offer £3 a share for the company. Menvier-Swain, another company in the sector, was taken over by Cooper Industries last month for £164.5m, so the market obvi-

ther corporate action. Billiton was the most wanted blue chip, up 7,25p to 155p. The base metals company, which demerged from the South African mining group Geneor in July, sent the shares into freefall recently when it is-Vodafone's subscriber num- Having drifted as much as 34 sued a gloomy outlook on trad-

ously feels it's high time for fur-

The house brokers have also surged 14.5p to 940p. put out buy notes.

ration. Lloyds, encouraged by an SBC Warburg buy recom-760p; Royal Bank of Scotland



DJFMAMJJASONO

BTR was spurned, though, Financial stocks were once after it issued warnings on again being asked for after re-three fronts. The company said ports of a merger hetween sterling continued to cause UBS and Swiss Bank Corpo- problems and advised that the motions company, was another troubles in Asia could also have an impact. Moreover, it mendation, jumped 28p to alluded to difficulties in South in August, announced a 49 per America. The shares closed 25.5p poorer at 182.5p. An array of analysis' downgrades are expected to follow. In the zoomed up 10p to 107.5p. meantime, SBC Warburg reck-

> up value of 200p. operations, Seifi Ghasemi, quit, 32p to 943p at one point. However, they staged a recovery, and ended 5p better at 980p.

ons the company has a break-

British Biotech topped the

Générale said it was overvalued. Ashquay Group did better, closing 3p up at 31.5p on the back of a 178 per cent in-

crease in interim profits. Landround, the travel proto benefit from good results. The company, which floated on AIM cent increase in profit before tax and flotation expenses of £506,000. As a result, the shares

Several exporters breathed a sigh of relief, after the pound weakened. Siebe closed 21p BOC had a mixed time. richer at £12.42; and British The president of its US gases Steel edged up 0.5p to 139p at close of play. Smiths Industries and sent the shares tumbling also put on a sport, notching up another 30p to close at 880p.

Harrisons & Crosfield meanwhile soared 6.5p to 123.5p after selling its Edward Baker second-line fallers, shedding Petfoods business for £106.3m.

TAKING STOCK

Corporate Executive Search International, the headhunter, hit the right spot yesterday when it poached a new chief executive from rival firm Russell Reynolds. The company, which is listed on AIM, added 0.5p to close at 4p after appointing Roger Evans. At the same time, it said Mark Shields, managing director and one of the founders, would relinquish his role. He will remain on the board, but will work on a project-by-project basis, Corporate Executive said.

Prestbury Group, the AIMquoted property company, is rumoured to be gearing up for some kind of corporate activity. The company, which closed up 0.25p to 5.25p, is headed by Nick Leslan. Prestbury bought Mr Leslau's own private property company, Edenbawk, for £11.5m last month.

	bers for the final quarter of the points down after lunch, the in- ing. But it finally bounced DJFMAMJJASONO second-line fallers, shedding Petfoods business for £106.3m. £11.5m last month.
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Watchdog set to crack down on Railtrack charges

The rail regulator will next week launch a review of track access charges levied by Railtrack, which is likely to mean a cut in the company's revenues. Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent, reports on the latest toughening in the operating regime for the group which owns the track and signal network.

John Swift QC, the regulator, is to tighten the price formula covering billions of pounds of track access charges, paid by operators to Railtrack. The existing price control, which cuts charges by two per cent below inflation each year, expires in 2001.

What has perturbed the regulator is not only that Railtrack is entitled to rake in large access fees, but that it also has no obligation to spend them on the network at the level the Regulator assumed when he allowed the company to nearly double its charges in 1995.

In fact, until Mr Swift had wrung from Railtrack a licence amendment which committed the company to £16bn of spending over a decade, executives were not bound by any contractual arrangements. Officials have also noted that Railtrack made a pre-tax profit of £346m - when 94 per cent of its income came from fixed track access charges.

The high level of the track access were meant to ensure that a replacement railway would built in the "fullness of time". It was not, say officials, there to bolster Railtrack's bottom line.

The purpose of the regulator's announcement next week not simply to make it cheaper for train companies to run trains. One option being considered would see the track charges reduced and then any savings being used to cut subsidy to the operators.

Despite the legal complexities this would entail, officials at the Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) point out that it would mean there would be more money available for the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions.

A tough price review would certainly affect the company's profitability but, analysts point out, some of it could be made up by the largely property rental and sales. Not all track charges would be altered. They vary in length from seven to 15 years having started in 1994.

Another option is for the regulator to force Railtrack to become "more efficient". This would see a change in the performance regime which many train companies suspect is being too easily met by Railtrack. Last year, the one of the "principal reasons" that revenue from the passenger train franchises grew by £116m was that "there was a substantial improvement in the contribution from the performance regime".

One company Connex is appealing to get its £9m bill reduced because, it argues, the performance of Railtrack in the yardstick year of 1994 was "dismal". More worrying for Railtrack is that Mr Swift is investigating a £46m "weather provision" made in 1997. This was £26m more than the previous year and it is understood Mr Swift has "concerns" about the amount put aside.

City pundits were blunter. "Railtrack has been taking the regulator for a ride. It is no surprise that he will play hardball," said one analyst.

Mr Swift is also playing a political game. Rather than co-ordinating his actions with John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for transport, the regulator has "gone it alone". This is unlikely to endear him to Mr Prescott, now in Kyoto for the conference on climate change - who has made it clear he wishes to be kept abreast of any new developments.

The news of the review will dampen Railtrack's high spirits. Earlier this month. the company announced a 10 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profits.

Pre-tax profits increased £173m to £190m before Railtrack's windfall tax of £155m. The improved profits were made despite a £18m restructuring charge and a £ 28m bad weather provision.

The results were cautiously welcomed by Mr Swift. Noting a 38 per cent increase in Railtrack's investment programme, he said: "It is long overdue but the interim results show that it is now under way."



High stakes: The super-rich who visit London's top casinos can gamble away up to £10m in a single night, in a lifestyle exemplified by Sharon Stone in the film 'Casino'

London Clubs hit by high rollers on a lucky streak

Casino operators don't always enjoy a lucky roll of the dice. London Clubs International has this year had its bid for troubled rival Capital Corporation blocked by the Government and is being eased out of the Ritz Hotel. Now its profits have been dented by a bunch of high rollers who struck lucky. Nigel Cope, City Correspondent, reports on tougher times in the casino industry.

London Clubs, which operates the Ritz and Les Ambassadeurs casinos in central London yesterday blamed a winning streak by some of its heaviest gamblers for a sharp tall in half year profits.

Chief executive Alan Goodenough said: "Good fortunes were enjoyed by a number of our major customers both at the Riz and more unusually at the Rendezvous."

Top casinos define high rollers as the handful of super-rich who can gamble away up to £10m in a single night. In addition there is a group of several hundred international players who are willing to stake anything from £500,000 to £3m a session. This group's success at the roulette and blackjack tables forced London Clubs' half year profits down from £19.9m to £14.4m.

London Clubs said trading since the half year had seen many punters hit a losing streak. helping figures for the first eight months higher than last year. However, there are concerns in the industry that the effect of the strong pound and the financial crisis in Asia could affect even the wealthiest punters.

Mr Goodenough said the volatility at the upper end of the market, together with frustration over the lack of progress in the de-regulation of the industry had persuaded the company to accelerate its plans to expand outside Britain. "The potential for growth in the UK without de-regulation benefits is restricted. So we are looking at international markets," he said.

The casino industry has long complained that it is disadvantaged against other forms of gambling in Britain and against other easino markets around the world by the UK's gaming regulations. These restrict the number of slot machines that can be installed in casinos and state that customers must become a member of a casino 24 hours before being allowed entry.

London Clubs will lose its licence to operate the Ritz Hotel casino next June after failing to agree a new licence with the hotel's owners, the Barday Brothers. It plans to open a new casino in St James Street next July.

A company led by Aidan Barclay, the son of David Barclay is currently seeking the licence to operate the Ritz Hotel casino. The application is currently being heard by Westminster magistrates and a ruling is expected later this month.

The application is being supported by Lord King, the former British Airways chairman, and the industrialist Lord Hanson. The Barclay brothers, who bought the Ritz in 1995, have said they have no financial interest in the company applying for the licence.

With odds on expansion looking poor at home. LCI is trying its luck abroad. It yesterday confirmed plans to invest \$50m in a 25 per cent stake in Aladdin Gaming, the US group which is re-developing the Aladdin hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Far East turmoil prompts fresh BTR profits warning

BTR yesterday issued its third profit warning in two years, plunging shares in the troubled conglomerate to a six-year low. Despite their frustration, Peter Thal Larsen finds shareholders have little choice but to support the chief executive ian Strachan's attempts to turn the

In a trading statement, BTR said it expected second-half profits to be "more or less in line with the restated first half results". That's in contrast with the upbeat outlook the group gave in September, when Mr Strachan said he expected BTR "to show improvement in the second half of this year over the first half".

The stock market reacted viciously, pushing BTR shares down 25.5p to 182.5p as analysts slashed their profit forecasts for the year to December by as much as 10 per cent. Profits are now expected to come in at about £1.06bn.

BTR shares have lost almost half of their value since Mr Strachan took over as chief executive in January 1996, underperforming the FTSE 100 index by 60 per cent.

Industry experts reacted to the news with an air of resignation. "People are just punchdrunk with BTR," said one observer. "They are totally fed up with it."

BTR blamed the profits disappointment on the economic turmoil in Asia and South America and the renewed strength of sterling. The group, which has £900 million of annual sales in emerging markets and is highly exposed to the automotive industry, has been particularly hit by rising interest rates in Brazil. "Auto

Bristol & West today launched what it believes

will be the first account linked to ISA, the Gov-

ernment's new savings scheme. The building

society is planning to launch its savings

scheme next week, 16 months ahead of the

planned Individual Savings Account, which is

that will replace PEPs and Tessas, and which

the Government says is designed to encour-

age millions of people to get into the savings

an ISA, the Bristol & West account can be

opened with as little as £10, with the maximum

To help people on modest incomes save for

habit, were announced earlier this week.

Details of the ISA, the tax-exempt vehicle

officially due out in April 1999.

investment set at £1,000.

Bristol & West launches first ISA scheme

It will pay 7.2 per cent gross per annum. sa and PEP savings accounts worth more than

although the account holder will lose all in- £50,000 would be taxed from April 1999.

sales were down 60 per cent in November," Mr Strachan said.

Meanwhile, BTR said the rise of sterling would also affect full-year figures. The group now estimates that currency movements will wipe £75m off its profits, compared to an earlier estimate of £63m. Mr Strachan said the strong pound was also hurting subsidiaries with . substantial exports like Brook-Hansen, its electric motors unit. "Currency hits you both ways in the export market and in import substitution," said Mr Strachan.

Despite the gloom, few observers felt there was any option but to back the management's attempts to concentrate on its main engineering businesses. "It's difficult to see how you could engineer another major rethink," said an analyst. "The BTR team had better stick to their task."

Since Mr Strachan took over, he has implemented a strategy of slimming BTR. down to a core of engineering businesses. The group has largely completed the first phase of the disposal program, selling businesses with annual turnover of £2.3bn, and last month sold its polymeric products division to a management buyout team for £515m. It is currently negotiating the sale of its packaging division, which is expected to raise £3bn, and a clutch of smaller subsidiaries. The group hopes to complete the sales next year. "We've had tremendous interest in all of those businesses," Mr Strachan said.

Mr Strachan said the proceeds would be re-invested in the four core engineering divisions: automotive; control systems; power 'drives; and specialist engineering. He also said the group would return a "significant proportion" of the cash to shareholders.

terest on the money removed before the ma-

est will be paid on maturity and the aim is to

pay that tax-free, within the ISA rules. Bristol

& West's product manager Martin Broomfield

public do not abandon the concept of saving be-

tween now and the introduction of the ISA.

tax-free earnings within the new guidelines. We

will do our best to get our pre-ISA accepted

as an ISA, as we did with our pre-Tessa." The

Government ran into criticism when it launched

the ISA on Tuesday. It was accused of squeez-

ing the middle classes after announcing that Tes-

"We also want to try and maximise the savers'

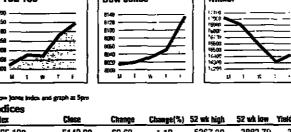
said: "Our primary concern is to ensure that the

Assuming no money is taken out, all inter-

turity date of May 6 1999.

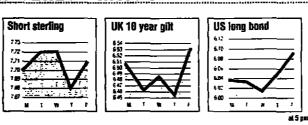
FTSE 100

STOCK MARKETS



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TSE 250	4751.30	26.80	0.57	4963 80	4321 80	3 35
TSE 350	2469.00	26.20	1.07	2570 50	1935.70	3.41
TSE All Share	2409.33	24.28	1.02	2507 68	1942.22	3.40
TSE SmallCao	2296.5	5.10	0.22	2407.40	2127 50	3.32
TSE Redgling	1248.5	0.90	0.07	1346 50	1198.70	3 38
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INTEREST RATES

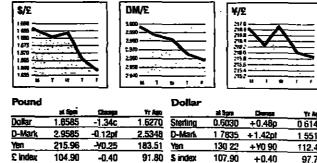


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Money	Marke	t Rates			Bond	Yields		
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UK US	7.75	1.34	7.91	0.95	6.53	-1 11	6.46	-1 19
US	5.91	0.36	6.00	0.31	5.91	-0.32	6.10	-0.41
Japan	0.71	0.23	0.71	0.13	1.82	-0.70	2.43	-0.73
Germany	3.76	0.52	4.09	0.79	5.42	-0 44	5.98	-0 69

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Che (pi	% Chiga	Falls	Price (p)	Chg lay	% Clig
Christies Intl.	249.50	20.00	8.71	TI Group	500.00	-10 00	-1.96
Harrisons & Cro	123.50	6.50	5.56	Tomkins PLC	306.00	-6.25	-2.00
London Clubs	289.00	14.00	5.09	Commercial Uni	869.00	-19.00	-2.14
Billiton PLC	155.00	7.25	4.91	RJB Mening PLC	160.00	-5.00	-3.03

CURRENCIES



91.80 S index OTHER INDICATORS

*#5ph	Close	C≥g	Y: Ago		والما	Dig	Yr ago	Head Tgs
Brent (3) (5)	17,99	0.17	24.55	GDP	113.90	3.80	109.7	Jan
Gold (S)	287 95	-0.10	371.85	RPI	159 50	37	153,81	Nov
Silver (\$)	5.31	0.01	4.75	Base R	Lates	7.25	6.00	

Embattled UBS poised for merger with SBC

Swiss banking giant UBS is poised for a multi-billion merger of part or all of its operations with its rival SBC, banking sources said last night. As Lea Paterson reports, a merger may be the only lifeline for embattled UBS.

Employees of Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) have been summoned to weekend meetings to hear details of their fate, according to banking sources. UBS is expected to announce a merger with rival Swiss Bank Corporation (SBC), a move which would lead to a jobs-"bloodbath" in both the City and elsewhere. A full-scale merger of the two banks would create one of the largest banks in the world. with assets of more than £350hn.

"UBS has been in paralysis for six months because there's been a feeling that a major announcement is on its way. The bank's lost several key staff in the process," said one insider

thought to have begun some months ago, following UBS's snub to Switzerland's third

yesterday. Discussions between the two banks are

banking giant. Credit Suisse First Boston

(CSFB), last year. In April 1996, UBS rejected overtures from CSFB, which recently took control of parts of BZW. Barclays' investment banking arm

Sources close to UBS say the beleaguered bank could hive off some of its banking activities and merge the remainder with SBC. JP Morgan, the US investment bank, has been named as a likely bidder for the Swiss bank's sizeable equities business. And speculation has also focused on Deutsche Bank, the German banking giant, as a possible purchaser of UBS's Swiss client portfolio.

Shares in both UBS, whose board met yesterday, and SBC, were sharply higher in Zurich trading yesterday.

The Swiss market is heavily over-banked, and all three Swiss banking giants posted heavy losses last year. Merger speculation has been heightened in recent weeks tollowing comments from a major UBS shareholder, Swiss investor Martin Ebner. Mr Ebner recently suggested that it would make sense for two of the Swiss banks to merge and then hive off some business or join forces with a foreign partner.

"UBS is no longer master of its own destiny. If it tries to stay on its own, it's already too late for it to succeed," commented one source last night.

Matra chief appointed head of Airbus

Forgeard, is set to be appointed as the new managing director of the four-nation aircraft consortium Airbus Industrie. Confirmation that Mr Forgeard is to take

over the post when Jean Pierson retires next year is expected before Christmas, Mr. Forgeard is currently a board member of the French desence electronics group Lagardere and chairman of its Matra space and defence

The appointment is key since Mr Forgeard will be one of the executives charged with taking Airbus torward as a single corporate entity from 1999.

Airbus held a meeting of its supervisory board in Toulouse yesterday to discuss Mr Pierson's successor but a spokesman refused to comment on whether a candidate had been selected or when an announcement might be

However, sources in the office of the French Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, confirmed that Mr Forgeard was France's preferred candidate for the post,

senior posts in government and industry. A though this has not yet been confirmed. graduate of the prestigious Ecole Politique.

A senior French aerospace executive, Noel he has acted as adviser to French transport and armed forces ministers and sat in Jacques Chirac's cabinet in 1986 in between spells in the French steel industry with Usinor-Sacilor.

It was always certain that a Frenchman would take over the post from Mr Pierson, who was a senior executive with the French Airbus partner Aerospatiale before taking up his present job.

Other candidates linked with the job include Christian Blane, the former chairman of Air France, Louis Gallois, chairman of the state French railway SNCF, and Gerard Blanc. director of Airbus operations at Aerospatiale.

British Aerospace, which has a 20 per cent stake in Airbus, is familiar with Mr Forgeard. Its missiles division is part of the Anglo-French joint venture Matra BAe which Mr Forgeard is responsible for, BAe also partnered the parent group Lagardere in its unsuccessful bid for the defence electronics group Thomson-CSF

The chairman of the Airbus supervisory board. Edzard Reuter, formerly head of Daimler Benz Aerospace, is also due to retire Mr Forgeard is part of that charmed inner next March. He is expected to be replaced by circle of Frenchmen who alternate between his successor at Dasa, Manfred Bischoff,

– Michael Harrison

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JEREMY WARNER ON WHY IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN BETTER TO ALLOW KOREA TO GO UNDER AND THE MERGER OF UBS AND SBC

Why not allow Korea to go to the wall?

What on earth persuades the international community to come to the aid of countries that get themselves into economic difficulties, as it did this week with a record-breaking \$55bn package of support for Korea?

Very few of us these days would think it right to bail out an ailing industrial company, or even a bank, and it is only charity which leads us either privately or through the mechanism of the welfare state to help those who should be helping themselves. So why rescue the sick man of Asia?

Explanations range from the altruistic to the self-interested, but certainly the specific case of Korea is a rather harder one to justify that usual, if only because Korea is a comparatively rich and successful country. Even we in Britain are being forced to contribute to this massive handout, both indirectly through our contributions to the International Monetary Fund, and directly with our own \$1,25bn line of standby credit.

On any perspective, this is a bizarre turn of events. Britain still seems prepared to pay Korea's leading corporations huge amounts of money in state aid to set up in business here. Now we are proposing to subsidise them at the other end of the spectrum too.

The West really only has itself to blame for the crisis in the Far East. It is partly our Western money that funded the breakneck pace of growth in the Pacific Rim economies. For every couple of jobs created with our money at Daewoo in Scoul, we lost a couple at Rover in Coventry, but still we cheered from the sidelines, wowed by the success of the Asian Tigers.

Until the present crisis, few had anything

but praise for the Far Eastern economic model, of which Korea seemed to be a shining example, Before the election, Tony Blair even went so far as to make one of his policysetting speeches from the Pacific Rim, as if to say the way they do it out here is what we in Britain should be aiming for too.

As their manufacturing base grew and prospered, we began in an act of reckless insanity to start competing with our European partners for their favours. Worse, our own regions would outhid each other for their "expertise" and "knowhow" with

ever larger amounts of taxpavers' money. As we now know, these economies are more epitomised by corruption, cronyism and easy money than anything resembling the miraculous. Isn't it about time all this ended? Isn't it about time we turned off the life support machine?

Er, well, maybe not. Satisfying though it might be to see the Korean economy go down the swannee, it probably wouldn't be in our interests. A Korean collapse would greatly exaggerate the already serious economic crisis in the Far East, with damaging knock-on effects into the world economy.

At its most extreme the effect might be to plunge the global economy into a deflationary spiral. In the short term at least, it therefore cannot be in our interests to let these economies go to the wall, Moreover, though the Far East seems to have done rather better out of the bargain than us, these are still important markets for Westem goods. As a consequence, the slowdown in these economies is already threatening growth in the West as well.

smaller, less significant and poorer economies, nobody would have lifted a finger to help them. It is because their collapse threatens our own prosperity that we are willing to lend support.

The other main argument for this bailout is that it comes at a high price. The international package of aid is only a temporary bridging loan; everyone expects to get their money back. More importantly, the IMF is able to extract a weighty level of economic and structural reform as a condition of its support. This is judged important not just because it ought to bury the lax, corrupt and dirigiste ways of the past, but also because it allows the IMF to impose the American economic model on a region which has habitually cherry-picked the most advantageous aspeets of our Anglo Saxon ways while attempting to disregard the rest.

In a sense, what the IMF is doing is its own particular form of economic imperialism. Because the Asian economies have so ruthlessly exploited our own domestic economies and capital markets while stubbornly failing to open up their own, it seems somehow justifiable. Britain knows all about the humiliation of going through the IMF mangle, because we were there ourselves in the mid-1970s. We also know that it is possible to see in the reforms that were forced on us by the IMF in 1976 the roots of our own economic revival today.

The more enlightened elements of the Korean government already see their own national humiliation much in this light. For

The unpleasant irony is, that if these were them there is a silver liming to the crisis, because it allows for the introduction of necessary economic and structural reform while being able firmly to blame it all on the forces of American imperialism. Neat.

There is an important argument against what the IMF is doing, however, which is the argument used against all forms of development aid. Far from helping the situation, such support only accentuates it, the argument goes, by providing a cushion and slowing the necessary process of catharsis and rebirth. There is something in this, though in the case of a large economy like Korea, it needs to be carefully weighed against the likely economic damage to the West if we were to allow events to take their own course. The possibility that things could turn against the West politically if Korea were allowed to go to the wall also needs to be taken into account.

It is human nature always to avert a crisis where it is possible to do so, a tendency learnt from the generally brutal short-term consequences of allowing things to reach the meltdown stage. But it may be that we would have done better to leave well alone. By any standards this was a massive bail-out. It is all very well pouring money into ensuring that the merry go round carries on turning, but it is not at all clear that the world can afford these massive infusions of cash. The IMF has yet to get its money back from the last bail-out, Mexico. This latest raft of rescues tests the international purse strings to their limits.

Western equity markets have meanwhile begun to behave as if the crisis in the Far

East never happened. Both the FTSE 100 index in London and the Dow in New York are back to within spitting distance of their all-time highs. Many have lost more money on the bounce than the original drop. This can be taken as evidence either of a remarkable degree of resilience in Western economies to events elsewhere in the world, or of a quite breathtaking complacency. Unfortunately, I am unable to offer an opinion on which of these views is the more likely to be correct. Things have defied gravity for so long now, that it may be this has become the natural way of the world.

Merging Swiss Bank Corporation with Union Bank of Switzerland makes such obvious commercial sense that it is a wonder it has taken the two so long to start talking. The potential for cost savings in regional, private and investment banking make the benefits of combining Nat West and Barclays look pedestrian by comparison.

However, there's another way of look at it. Putting together SBC Warburg with UBS Phillips and Drew will mean big job losses in the City and the disappearance of vet another competitive force in equity trading and corporate finance. We've already had in short order the sale and consolidation of the equity businesses of both NatWest Markets and BZW. Now another big player, UBS, is about to join them in the dustbin of history. Isn't it about time the competition authorities took a look at whether the investing public is being disadvantaged by this banking carve up?

Ionica crisis mounts as breach in banking covenants looms.

The problems circling lonica, the troubled wireless phones operator, deepened yesterday after it emerged that the group had warned its main lenders that it expected to breach its banking covenants. Michael Harrison report on lonica's spectacular plunge in fortunes.

lonica has told its bankers that it will be untikely to meet the challenging obligations in a £300m loan agreement signed in June, a month before the group's £640m flotation.

To meet the covenants, Ionica must have 195,000 residential phone customers by the end of next year and be able to offer a service to 3.8 million homes. It currently has just 31,000 subscribers and covers 1.65 million households.

The agreement also stipulates that the company must achieve minimum revenues of £19.2m between October and December 1998. The group has pioneered technology in England and Wales which uses wireless signals from ariels on homes to by-pass British Telecom's residential network.

Sources close to the discussions said though lonica would not need the funds until next year, it was "unlikely" to meet the obligations. Talks to renogiate the loans are expected to begin next Spring, when the company is clearer about whether it can solve a series of technological problems. though the banks are likely to impose even more onerous conditions on the loans. A spokesman said the company talked to its banks "all the time" and its business case was unaltered.

These setbacks have spawned a City nightmare as the shares, floated in July at 390p and which briefly touched 399p. crashed over the past few weeks to little more than £1, wiping almost £500m from the company's market value. Yesterday they fell another 5p to 102.5p, after one investor sold 660,000 shares at just 95p.

getic but embattled chief executive and founder, has embarked on a City offensive to the nerves of investors and analysts. But its shareholders, who include the Boots chairman Lord Blyth and a phalanx of big companies led by Yorkshire Electric, must be won-

Mark Lambert, from Merrill-Lynch said: "Their covenants are tied to certain operating targets which are likely to be more difficult to achieve." Mark Lambert. He pointed to the brief trad-

ing record of a company which only began its service last year. "Investing in young companies always carried additional risks. Unfortunately in this case many of those risks have materialised."

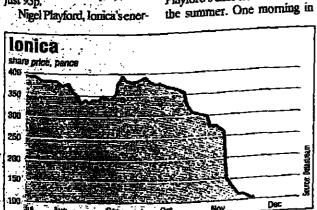
Privately other analysts are much less complimentary. One said that Mr Playford's position at the helm should be seriously questioned, though few expect him to step down, not least of Ionica's reputation as a one-man сотралу.

This is a woeful tale of management inadequacy and incompetence," said another. "I don't think I have ever seen a share price drop in the way Ionica's has and you have to wonder who is going to have the courage to call the bottom of the market and start buying them again."

Mr Playford's grip on day-today operations has already been weakened by the appointment last month of Mike Biden, a former BT executive, to work alongside him as chief operating officer. "This is a classic move for a telecoms company in difficulties," said one analyst. "You poach someone from BT who should know how to run things. Whether it will work out that way is another matter."

But the small print in Ionica's flotation prospectus points to another reason to retain Mr Playford, who is paid a £250,000 salary. Apart from a three-year notice period if his contract is terminated, the documents show he can only be asked to resign as a director if he owns less than 5 million Ionica shares. He currently holds twice that number, giving him about 5 per cent

of the company. The crisis is a far cry from Mr Playford's exuberant mood over



early June, as he sat in the boardroom of Ionica's Cambridge headquarters surrounded by piles of ring-bound documents entitled "Introduction to the London Stock Exchange," he enthused about the company's plans to take on dering when the rot will stop. BT in the domestic telephone Analysts also remain sceptical. market with its innovative radio-

based technology. 'This business exists to keep shareholders, employees, customers and, to some extent, the Government happy. So far we are keeping them all happy simultaneously. I can't see any shareholders being interested in selling out until our dream comes true," he said.

For weeks after the float whispers in the City had suggested the opposite, with suspicions that Ionica's innovative technology had hit serious problems. But the scale of the difficulties stunned investors, as last month the company admitted to a list of technical and operational setbacks.

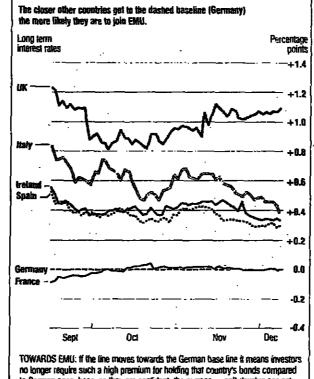
The base stations in some areas have already been swamped by demand, hitting capacity constriaints. Worse still, new software to boost call capacity from Nortel, one of the world's largest equipment makers and Ionica's technology partner, will not appear until next May.

On top of this analysts were stunned to hear that many of lonica's customers who flocked to join the service had turned into credit risks. Disconnections have soared, while many prospective subscribers have been rejected because of low credit ratings.

Yesterday Ionica quietly extended its service to 191,000 homes in Sheffield and Rotherham. But it has simultaneously been forced to stop marketing to homes in parts of East Anglia, the first region to gain a service, because capacity at base stations has run out.

Back in June, it did not appear as if anything could dent Ionica's prospects. Surveying the landscape, Mr Playford said he could not spot any obvious disaster waiting to happen. "When we started in 1992 we have no technology, no money. no staff, no customers, no interconnection and no number portability. Now we can tick every one of those and if we do no more than we are doing now

we will do fantastically well." He also made the now bollow-sounding pledge that Ionica would not repeat the mistakes of so many of the cable companies that had gone from shooting stars to basket cases within months of flotation. "The reason shares in the cable operators have done so hadly is that they made promises they have not been able to keep," he said.



Who will be in EMU? The financial markets' view

to German ones, because they are confident, the currency won't devalue against the mark. In other words, they think that country will be locked into a single currency with Germany in 10 years' time.

AWAY FROM EMU: However, if they think the country won't be in EMU, that if will have higher inflation, and that there is a risk of a future devaluation against the mark, then they will demand an extra premium for holding that country's bonds, so

When will EMU start? The City Analysts' View.

The Independent asked analysts from: Nikko Europe, Paine Webber, ABN Amro, JP Morgan, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell Saloman Brothers, Goldman Sacks, HSBC James Capel, UBS what probability they placed on EMU starting on time.

Probability EMU never happens:	4%	(4% (ast week)
Probability EMU is delayed:	15%	(15% last week)
Probability EMU starts on time:	81%	(81% last week)

EMU boost from German growth figures

German GDP figures released earlier this week could mean that EMU gets off to a smooth start, according to The Independent's panel of experts. The data showed German economic growth was still heavily reliant on a buoyant export sector. But domestic demand remained relatively weak.

According to Robert Lind of ABN Amro, the figures make it less likely the Bundesbank will raise German interest rates again. The last German rate rise was badly received in France. The Bank of France followed the Bundesbank lead and increased rates, despite government concern about unemployment.

"The risks to monetary union are political, not economic," commented Julian Jessop of Nikko Europe.

The re-election on Tuesday of pro-European Oskar Lafontaine as leader of the German opposition has also boosted EMU's chances of starting on time, according to Mr Jessop. "We are thinking of revising our probability [of EMU starting on time] upwards," he said yesterday.

Mr Lafontaine's main rival Eurosceptic Gerhard Schröder, currently Prime Minister of Lower Saxony. Following this week's vote. Mr Schröder is less likely to emerge as the Opposition's challenger to Chancellor Kohl in next September's federal elections.

Courts warns on impact of strong pound

Courts, the international furniture and electrical retailer. warned that the impact of the strong pound would have a greater effect in the second half of the financial year as it unveiled a 1.6 per cent rise in profits for the first six months.

For the six months to September it made £9.71m, up from £9.56m, on a 16.6 per cent increase in turnover from continuing operations to £210m from £180m. The company proposed a dividend of 1.05p, up 5 per cent. If September 1996 exchange rates from had been used to translate the half-year's figures, turnover would have been higher by £14.1m and pretax profits by £1.3m.

BOC man quits

The president of BOC Gases Americas and chairman and chief executive of BOC Process Plants and Cryostar, Seifi Ghasemi, has quit, industrial gases group BOC said yesterday. In a statement, Mr Ghasemi said he was leaving because he wanted the chance to run a company in his own right. BOC said it expected to announce Mr Ghasemi's replacement and

Carpet businesses sold

Household goods group Readicut International is selling its UK and Dutch carpet businesses for £30m. The company also reported a 36 per cent increase in its pre-tax profits to £4.5m in six months to September 30. Readicut said it was selling the businesses to Interface Europe Ltd and Interface Europe BV, subsidiaries of US group Interface Inc. The company said it was also planning to sell its American carpet and UK varn spinning businesses. The sale of these units were still being negotiated. The combined value of its yarn spinning and carpet businesses is expected to be more than £50m.

Cable TV dispute settled

Cable & Wireless Communications, the UK's biggest cable operator, has settled its dispute with Channel Onc. The pair were due to go to the High Court next week over CWC's exclusion of Channel One from its cheapest package of channels. CWC said yesterday that, although Channel One would not be included in its Headstart basic package, it would provide the channel with guaranteed revenue and would run promotions to encourage subscribers to take packages that did include Channel One.

A similar disagreement also broke out between NTL, the cable operator, and Live TV, the channel owned by Mirror Group. CWC and Channel One had two preliminary court bearings before deciding to settle ahead of next week's appearance. Headstart offers a telephone line and a small number of cable channels for £11.99 a month.

Betterware approach

Betterware, the catalogue household products group, has received an approach from two of its senior executives that could lead to a takeover bid at a "small premium" to its current market value of about £100m.

The approach has come from managing director Peter Hartley and finance director Paul Turner, who have a formed a company backed by Nat West Equity Partners. Shares in the Birmingham-based company jumped 4.5p to 102p after the news emerged, adding to the 10 per cent rise on Thursday.

Greene King profits up

Pre-tax profits at Greene King, the brewer and pub operator, rose 54 per cent to £20.7m from £13.4m, boosted by the acquisition of the Magic Pub group, which it bought in July 1996. The operator of Hungry Horse and King's Fayre pubs and brewer of Greene King and Abbot Ale said earnings per share adjusted for one-off items rose 13 per cent to 23.7p and pre-tax profit rose 26 per cent to £19.1m.

Greene King's Magic Pub acquisition drove operating profit growth, at a time when rival pub operators have reported pressure on profits because of competition and the need to spend heavily to meet consumers' taste for themed and branded pubs.

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS_	Dividen
Ashquay Group(I)	1.93m (D.732m)	0.220m (0.079m)	0 7p (0 3p)	-(-)
Coexts(I)	210.36m (178.1m)) 9.71m (9.56m)	7 46p (9.7p)	1 05p (1 0;
Greens XIIIq(1)	132.1m (107.6m)	20.7m (13.4m)	26 7p (18 8p)	5 3p (4.75)
Lambaround(F)	1 50m (0 972m)	0.391m (0.340m)	6.7p (n.a)	2.2p (-)
London Clubs Intel(1)	85.7m (94.34m)	14.31m (19.9m)	6.9p (8.9p)	2.630 (2.5
Phylopharm (F)	0 045m (0 934m)	3 06m (0.565m)	9 92p (2.54p)	·(-)

Footsie rebounds after jitters on Wall St at strong job figures

Stronger than expected US jobs data sent the FTSE tumbling yesterday on fears of plunges in the Dow. But the sell-off in Wall Street failed to materialise, and the FTSE rebounded strongly to close at 5142.9, up 60.6. Lea Paterson reports on a volatile day in the

The US economy is going from strength to strength, according to employment data released yesterday. Non-farm payrolls leapt by 404,000 in November, the biggest one-month increase since February 1996, and almost double the number markets had anticipated.

financial markets.

The unexpectedly strong figures put traders on red alert in the early afternoon. The Dow was expected to plunge by 100 points at market opening. 2.30pm GMT. Nervous UK dealers began selling off shares prior to Wall Street's opening. sending the FTSE tumbling from 5.148.7 just before midday to 5,047.9 at 1,45pm.

But US dealers held their

nerve, and shares in New York where, [US] retail sales will be remained firm on speculation that the employment data would not persuade the US Federal Reserve to raise inter-

The strong US stock market prompted a rebound in the FTSE in late afternoon trade. The FTSE closed at 5142.9, 60.6 up on the day. The US payrolls rise

brought November's unemployment rate down by 0.1 per cent to 4.6 per cent, the lowest since October 1973, Experts had expected unemployment to rise to 4.8 percent. Market jitters are likely to

continue until the Fed decides US interest rates later this month. But many US dealers are expecting rates to remain on hold, at least for the time being. There is still evidence of deflation in US manufacturing. and increases in productivity are helping rein in US labour costs. Investors switching funds out of the bond market also helped push US equities higher vesterday, dealers said.

US interest rate watchers will be watching US retail sales data and producer price data, both scheduled for release next week. "With calm markets else-

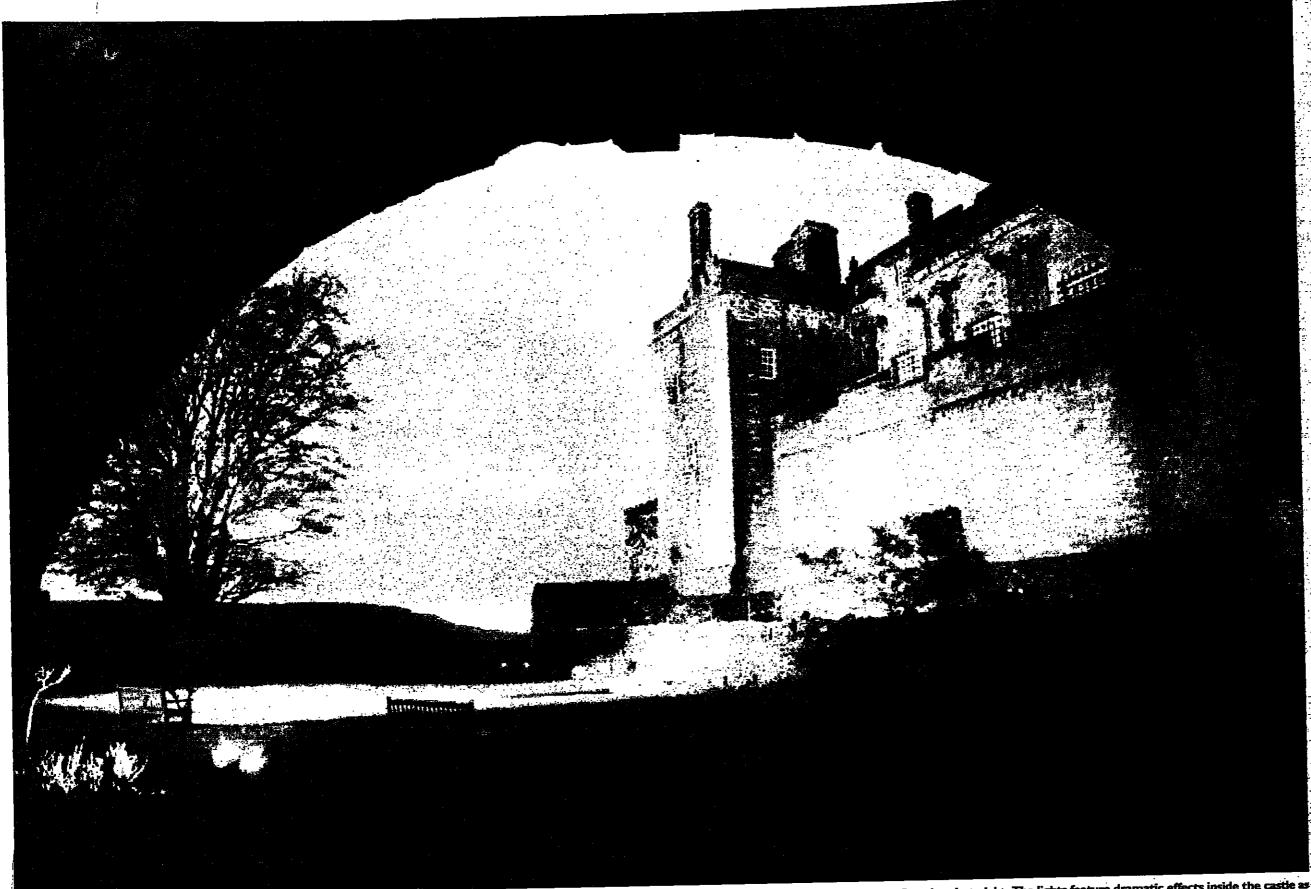
quite important in bringing back some focus to domestic markets and possibly some fear there may be a Fed move the following week," said Andrew Snowball, economist at Julius Baer Investments in London.

Figures out on Thursday are forecast to show US retail sales up 0.3 per cent in November after a fall of 0.2 percent in October. US producer nrice index data are scheduled for release on Friday.

UK economists will be keeping their eyes on UK retail prices data, due to be published on Tuesday. NatWest Markets are forecasting no change, leaving inflation running 3.7 per cent higher than at this time last year. "Prices in the high street should he held back by the strength of the pound and this should outweigh the negatives to leave inflation unchanged on all measures," said NatWest.

UK producer prices are scheduled for release on Monday. NatWest is forecasting a further wave of input price detlation, it said: "This should feed through to lower output price inflation, especially as UK manutacturers are feeling less bullish about prices and output."

26/THE BIG PICTURE



Northern lights: Stirling Castle bathed in the illumination of a new state-of-the-art floodlight system, installed at a cost of almost £500,000 and switched on for the first time last night. The lights feature dramatic effects inside the castle as well as playing on the textures and shadows of the walls that have witnessed many key episodes in Scotland's history



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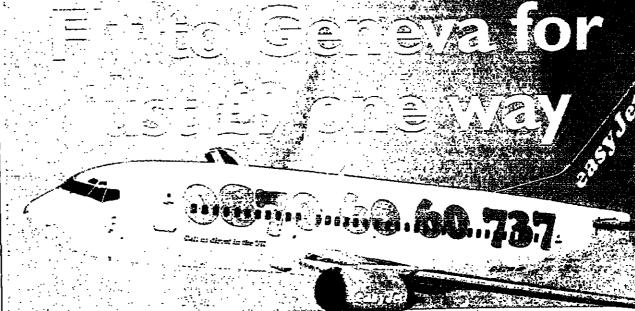


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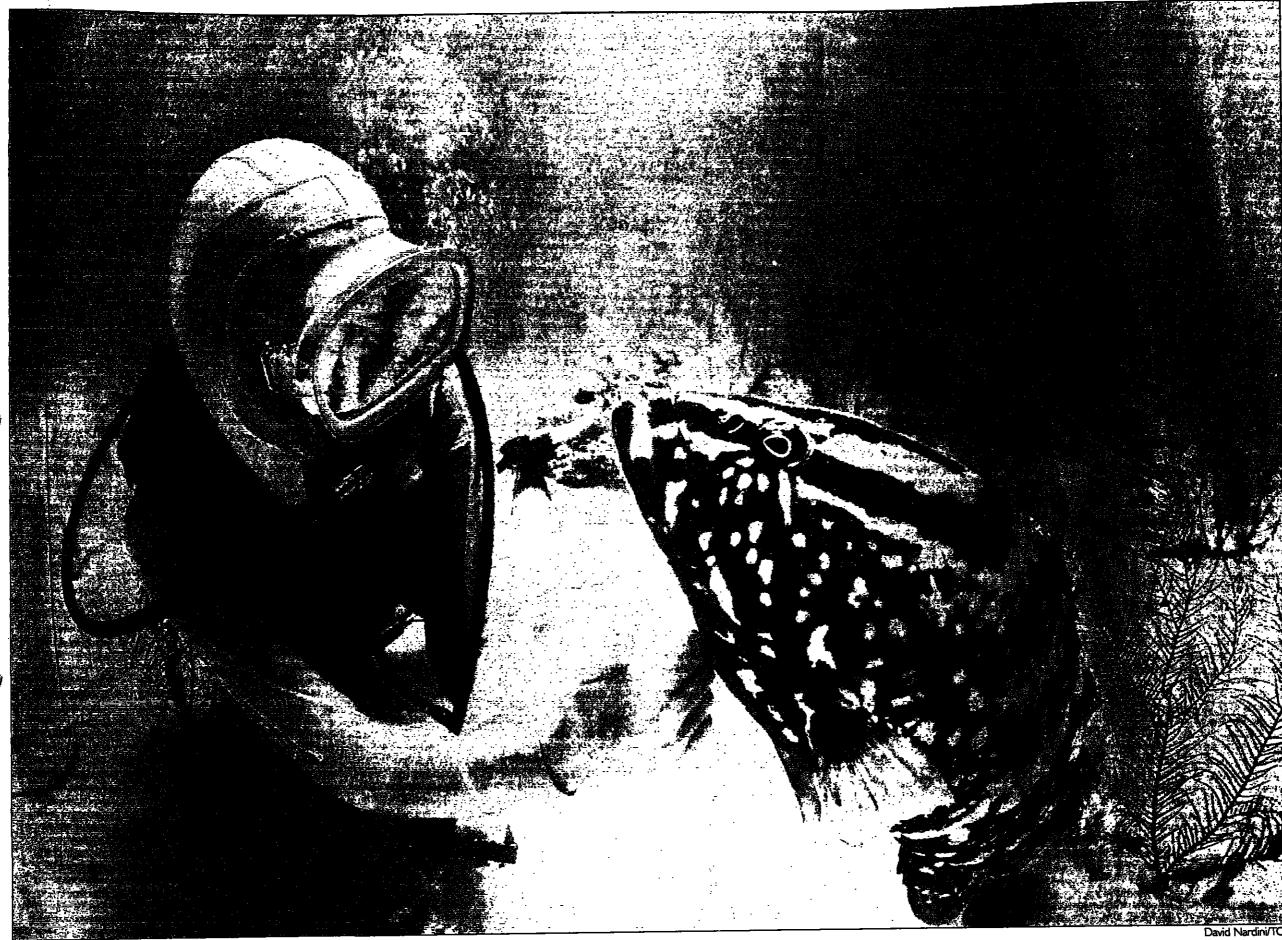
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TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT



Thai dive: waving, not drowning

Going on a diving course is like acquiring a passport to a different, magical and painfully fragile world, as Rhiannon Batten found out off an island in Thailand.

That first step off the side of the boat, heart thumping as I hit the water and the weight of the scuba gear dragging me into the water, was probably the most memorable I've ever taken.

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Poets est used british

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eyes fixed on the horizon. hands pressing mask to face. the sound of breathing gurgling in my ears - the next I had splashed down under the water

alone, silent, and weightless. Slowly my fellow divers plunged in and joined me. We were surrounded by subdued colour and shape and the mumbled munching of fish. Coral with velvety purple sacks spilled out soft, wafting tendrils to tickle the pretty flecked back of a passing ray. Pairs of that employed no touts. There

One moment I was balancing bannerfish with long graceful clumsily on the deck of the boat tails swept through shoals of shiny pink and yellow fish. This was the first time I had scuba dived and I knew as soon as I

jumped that I was booked. Back above the water, a few days earlier, the pastelcoloured boat bobbing across to the island of Ko Tao, off the east coast of Thailand, had been packed with noisy touts. all pushing hard to sell their dive schools. We decided on Planet Scuba dive school partly because it was one of the few



were other considerations they had a shop in town that was right next door to the local happy hour bar, the Safety Stop.

If they do not already have a scuba diving qualification. most visitors to Ko Tao take the four-day PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) Open Water course for beginners. This is a mixture of classroom lessons and practical instruction. You begin in the shallows of a swimming pool, where people like me can safely panic underwater and splutter their way to the surface, then

move on to the offshore dive

Once you've mastered the PADI slogans and grappled with the scuba equipment practice, drills are a doddle. It's all pretty straightforward - putting on and taking off equipment, carrying out safety checks, practising what to do if you run out of air under water (no one ever found themselves in this situation for real) and general underwater health and safety. The best thing about the course is that the more dives

continued on page 2

INSIDE

CITY BREAKS 48 hours in

Havana/5 SKHNG

Up, up and over the pistes /6

KNOWING... Alan Partridge's Norwich 8/9

SPORT

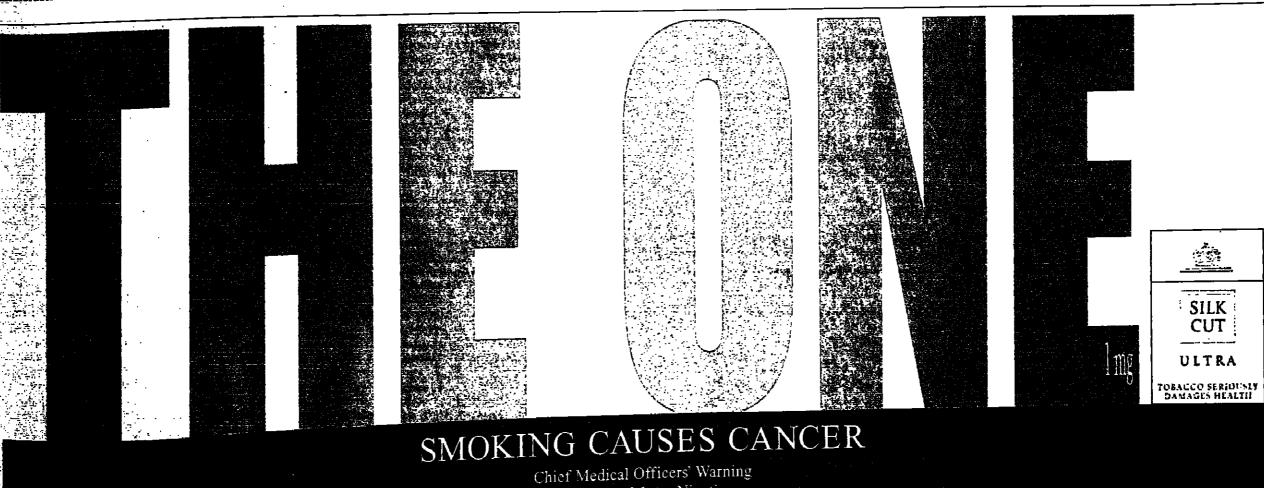
WORLD CUP

Hoddle: luck of the draw/24

Sepp Blatter: FIFA's Mr Fixit/24

RETURN OF THE HERCES

Bjorn Borgv McEnroe/2l



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you do, the more confident you become so, instead of spending the time underwater worrying about whether your air is getting too low or whether you're getting on everyone's nerves because you can't control your buoyancy, it suddenly all clicks into place rather like learning to drive. Once that happens, you relax and spend the time looking out for fantasic fish to talk about later at the Drop Zone bar.

Ko Tao itself is a tremendously pretty place. A steep and sweaty climb up the centre of the island brings you out at the highest vantage point, Two Views. From here you're faced with a problem: do you head down to quiet Tanote Bay and the best snorkelling for miles, or to Hat Sairce, the island's main beach? This is the nearest Ko Tao gets - for the time being - to a party capital. Pretty bungalows are clustered along the beach, interspersed every now with bars - rounds of B52s downed at the Drop Zone bar, AC Twos and its Black Moon parties, Blue Winds café and blueberry lassies gulped down in candlelight, plumped up bodies propped against elegant Thai cushions. Turn right off the beach and you come to the Halfway restaurant which does whole barbecued fish and spice pumpkin curries and, if you're still going on a Friday night, carry on to the Jungle Club to strut your stuffed form on the open-air dance floor,

Of course, though, the best scenery on Ko Tao is off the side of a boat: coral with names like Neptune's Cup, and fish as fancy, and as ridiculous, as pantomime dames. Coming back up to the surface is like popping a giant bubble into earth - even more so after a night dive when you bob back to the boat under a black sky sprinkled generously with brilliant stars. Once back on the boat there is always a huge feeling of satisfaction - and a lot of excited chatter, as though the divers are making up for the silence of the underwater

For the moment, Ko Tao is a diver's paradise. Indeed there is little to do here if you're not diving. You spend your days exploring curious fish and flamboyant corals and get back in time to spend your nights partying on Sairce beach. You don't even have to worry about a hangover - diving is the best cure you can get, or so the instructors kept proving to each other.

In fact Ko Tao should have a health warning. After two weeks there I'd become every bit as seduced as the instructors and would-be instructors who had gone home from holidays full of enthusiasm and returned a year or so later to live the life. As we finalty dragged ourselves on to the boat, leaving the island's little multi-coloured port, I was full of plans to come

Perhaps I should do so soon. Diving, I was told by some people, is destroying the island. The number of dive schools and related bungalows and bars, has exploded on an island that was relatively deserted five years ago. For the moment, though, there are still some deserted beaches, a largely uninhabited inland area and, so far, only limited electricity and low-rise construction. Yet things are changing fast and rumours of airstrips and big hotels being built are currently doing the rounds...

Getting there

Rhiannon Batten flew to Bangkok on Lufthansa for £250 return, on a special deal for under-26s through Campus Travel. In the absence of such special deals, the lowest prices - around £350 are available on carriers such as Bungladesh Biman, Tarom, and Uzbekistan Airways. From Bangkok you can buy bus/train and boat combination tickets, or travel down to Chumphon or Surat Thani and get the boat across from there. We got a combination boat and bus ticket from Ko Pha Ngan (the next island across) back to the Khao San Road in Bangkok for 300B (about £6). Sleeper trains are fun, but are more expensive.

Planet Scuba is at Hat Sairee and Mae Haad an Open Water course costs 7800B (around £160) and includes four dives. For a list of UK dive centres contact PADI International Ltd, Unit 6, Unicorn Park, Whitby Road, Bristol, BS4 4EX (0117 9711717)

Where to stay

Rhiannon Batten stayed at Sairee Cottages on Sairee Beach for 100B (about £2) a night for a double bed and private bathroom. There are many other such places - and it's fun to stroll down one of the beaches and find somewhere you like.

World Cup travel without scoring a goal

Sick of soccer? You probably will be, by the time the World Cup ends in Paris on 12 July next year. But the draw for the tournament focuses attention on some muchunderrated holiday destinations. In this roundup of the rivals, the linesmen are Simon Calder and Jon Glover, while Harriet O'Brien referees.

In the Horse and Groom on Thursday evening, while waiting for the World Cup draw to be made, we played fantasy travel: exploring the possible 30 rivals for England and Scotland in terms of travel potential. The dream holiday group was Spain, Mexico and Colombia, while the nightmare travel draw comprised Romania, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria.

The fantasy groups for both danger and beaches contained two of the teams the home countries will face: Brazil and Colombia. Tunisia was deemed one of the boring holiday trio (apologies, too, to Holland and Belgium). Neither England nor Scotland benefits from being in the fantasy gourmet group - France, Mexico and Japan - nor the optimum cultural draw (Italy, Mexico and

On the night, though, the draw produced an intriguing selection of countries. Included in our survey are those essential aiternatives: to lager, to soccer and to World Cup frenzy.

English expectations

Colombia: drug-crazed, violent criminals? Some of the England fans may indeed be, but most Colombians are purely friendly, welcoming hosts to South America's most splendid country.

Whatever you want out of a holiday, Colombia will provide - exquisite pre-Columbian jewellery at the Gold Museum in Bogota. serene Spanish colonialism in Cartagena, robustly excellent food in Medellin, and scenery from the graceful Caribbean coast to spectacular mountain

Best local alternative to lager: coffee, though more exotic substances are available. Best alternative activity to soccer:

swimming. Best place to avoid all mention of the W**** C**: the Darien Gap, the jungle wilderness in which Colombia merges with

Romania: this country earned its place in the nightmare fantasy group because it was the only one of the competing countries where one of us had been arrested (not counting England and Scotland).

But if you can evade the po-



Offside: markets provide a rare sense of adventure for visitors to Tunisia Photo: James Davis

lice, then the Transylvanian mountains and Moldavian monasteries provide ample reward for the traveller.

Best local alternative to lager: some Romanian wine, particularly the red, is outstanding. Unfortunately, this is the stuff that is exported. But what remains is cheap and cheeky. Best alternative activity to soccer:

skiing in the resort of Poiana Brasov.

Best place to avoid all mention of the W**** C**: try to find a monastery run by a silent order.

Tunisia: this is a location designed for the get-away-from-itall holiday, but with little to get away to. Most packages are designed for the unadventurous. with tourists generally expected to do little else than lie by the hotel pool and occasionally saunter around the local markets. For those needing to escape from the sunlounger, trips to the ruins of Cathage, to the socalled "sugar-box city" of Sidi Bou Said, and to the desert, are welcome diversions.

Best local alternative to lager: the local red wine is cheap and not at all disagreeable. Best alternative activity to soccer:

the camel touts on the beach will try to persuade you to take a ride along the sands. Best place to avoid all mention of the W**** C**: the cave where Kristin Scott Thomas met her demise in The English Batient.

which was filmed in Tunisia - as

was Star Wars.

Scottish suggestions Brazil: South America's largest

country recently set out to scare off tourists. Not content with an urban crime level of alarming proportions, it imposed a tax of £55 just to leave the country.

Yet it's worth stumping up for the most exuberant nation on earth, which also has the finest city beaches of anywhere in the world: Copacabana and Ipanema may have inspired some dismal songs, but they are superb strands fringing this huge, ungainly city.

But watch your belongings: the reason the bikinis are so brief is probably because everything else has been stolen.

Best local alternative to lager: aguadente, a rougher version of Norway: in any "Lakes and

Best alternative activity to soccer. if pressed, most Brazilians would suggest only death.

Best place to avoid all mention of the W**** C**: camping in the forgotten wilderness of the Pantanal. The South American Handbook warns, though, of piranhas and killer bees: "The inexperienced are cautioned not to strike out on their own".

Morocco: camels, peppermint tea, labyrinthine souks: images of Morocco tend to crowd in on each other, a reverberation of one of northern Africa's most colourful

has to be said, is easiest in the south - tourists tend to get hassled in the north) and you'll find an appealing sense of warmth and

generosity from the local people. Best local alternative to lager: peppermint tea, though some tourists prefer to smoke the produce of one of Morocco's leading cash (or should that be hash?)

Best afternative activity to soccer: show a Moroccan some water, and he or she will likely start fishing. The Atlantic coast of the Western Sahara is reckoned to be the optimum location.

Best place to avoid all mention of the W**** C"": Football is a national obsession, as befits a country where half the population is under 20. But the Sahara should escape the uproar.

Mountains fantasy group, Norway would be right up there with Chile. You wouldn't go there for its cities, though Bergen has one of the finest harbour settings in the world. You would go there for its scenery, a constantly astonishing series of encounters between steely waters and shattered

Glogg, a non-alcoholic (and therefore non-ruinous) cordial. Best alternative activity to soccer; some of the greatest outdoors in Europe, for hiking, eveling or sailing.

Best local alternative to lager:

Best place to avoid all mention of the W**** C**: Spitzbergen. Relax into the place (which, it the northernmost inhabited island on earth. It is split between Norway and Russia: the latter half is unlikely to show much interest. since they failed to qualify.

AA Roadwatch

London, A1 between Wattord Way, Mill Hill Circus and Fiveways Corner Car-

Hill Circus and Priveways Corner Car-rageway reduced to two lanes for long term roadworks until \$1st May 1998. Greater London, M1, between J6-J5, Wat-lord area. Roadworks and a contrallow,

with off peak and overnight lane and car-riageway closures. A 50mph speed limit is also in place. Until 22nd December West Yorkshire, M1 J43-J42 Stourton to

Lotthouse (M62). A contraffow and a 50mph speed limit are in place until 13th

July 1998
Somerset, M5 JC2-23 Highbridge to Bridgewater Major roadworks due to bridge repairs. A 3 mile contration is in

place (Until March 31 1998) West Midfands, M6 J8 (M5 (mk) 3 lanes

north and 2 lanes south closed, 50 mph speed limit in torce with additional lane

closures Until Dec 19th; Bucks, M40 J1a-3, Roadworks and con-

trallow (Until 1999) A803 East Dunbar-lonshire. Glasgow Road kilsyth Road-works at Ballmalloch Road until 9th

words at barriage and the Control of Trailing Greater Manchester, AS6 Old Trailing Roadworks until 19th January 1998.
South Larrarishire M74 between J10-11.

Lesmahagow and Happendon, Contraffo

Dec. 5(h) London A3211 Blackmars, Underpass. Contrallow Until April 15(h 1938)

The 1929 Warsaw Convention, which regulates international air travel, is such an important piece of legislation that even a ticketless airline such as EasyJet gives its passengers a slip of paper outlining the provisions. Look closely, though: the chief purpose of the treaty is to restrict the amount that can be claimed from an airline in the event of an accident.

I read the small print while waiting at Heathrow for a delayed Polish Airlines flight to, ironically, Warsaw "Liability of the carrier for death or personal injury to passengers is limited in most cases to approximately \$10,000 or \$20,000 (£6,000 or £12,000)." The 68year-old Convention, drafted in an age when air travel was far more primitive, offers a pitiably small figure for casualties; fortunately air accidents are so rare that the chances of ever being a victim of (a) a crash, and (b) the Warsaw Convention, are minuscule. It is much more likely that you will suffer from the other provisions of

the agreement. The flight to Warsaw eventually left about half an hour late - just tardy enough for me to miss my train connection to Poznan. As luck would have it, the departure board at the airport showed a Polish Airlines flight to Poznan. It cost £50, but would, in theory, allow me to make up the lost time. Except that it left 90 minutes late.

So I wrote to Polish Airlines explaining that as a result of the plane's delay at Heathrow, I was out of pocket by another £50 for an a even tardier flight. The airline's reply quoted Article 20 of the Convention: "A carrier is not responsible for changes of circumstances the carrier could not have foreseen eg weather cond-

ition [sic], traffic etc". But, I protested, the reason the flight arrived 90 minutes late at Poznan was because Polish Airlines failed to provide a serviceable plane. That treaty came to the airline's rescue again: "A carrier may without notice er I was checked in and in a cancel, terminate, divort. postpone or delay any flight with no future liability to the passenger. The phrase curic blanche springs to mind. In other words, the Warsaw Convention provides no real protection for consumers beyond the right to choose and had another shower beanother airline next time.

Polish Airlines provides a free magazine, called What, Where, When Warszawa. The tone of this publication is set by the cover, which promises Information for Tourists and Businessmen (my italics). The section "Warsaw at Night" covers just one club: "Arena opens at 8pm and delivers the goods until 4am. Any night of the week you witness at least three wrestling contests performed in front of you by professional as well as amateur as I paid on my card."

SIMON CALDER

WOMEN WRESTLER'S

(their capitals). "What's more, the contestants fight in POOLS FILLED WITH MUD OR OIL. On top of that, you will enjoy NON-STOP STRIP-TEASE, which may also be performed at your table at your individual request." This Warsaw convention sounds even tackier than the one governing air transport.

-You ask in your column what to do with a stopover of a few hours at LAX," e-mails Alexander Kleanthous. "I had that problem last year. I was flying Auckland-Los Angeles-Heathrow with Qantas/BA. I don't sleep on planes, so I arrived after the iong Auckland/LAX leg tired, with the prospect of a five-hour stopover and then the long LAX/LHR leg.

"I found that I had to clear US Immigration and customs (queues, of course, for both) then put my suitcase (already tagged through to LHR) back on a conveyor belt (another queue, of course). I exited to the arrivals area and made straight for the board on the wall showing airport hotels. "I saw a card for the

Wyndham Hotel, which looked comfortable and said it was closest to the airport (it was formerly a Marriott. I think, to give an idea of its standard). I called on the courtesy phone and they confirmed they could do a day room (it was around noon) for \$60, less than £40. I walked out of the door, and the shuttle bus was there immediately. Ten minutes latvery comfortable room. I showered and went straight to sleep in an enormous bed for three hours. I woke up. watched some American football on the TV, ordered a burger and fries from room service (when in Rome ...) fore dressing in fresh clothes (packed in my carry-on luggage which I had with me).

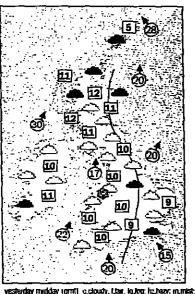
hours

"As Qantas and BA codeshare. I already had my boarding pass for the LAX-LHR flight, so I didn't need to check in again, just go straight to the gate in time for boarding.

"This was a wonderfully stress-free (after getting through Customs!) way of spending my stopover and set me up for the second flight. The cost was reasonable, and I didn't need US dollars,

WEATHER

The British Isles, noon today



..15.54 to

16.03 to

..15.51 to

_15.40 to

7.52

15.53

General summary and outlook: Northern and western Scotland will have a dull and damp day, with occasional rain and extensive hill fog. Eastern Scotland will also be cloudy but there will be some drier interludes. Northern Ireland will be mostly dull, with light rain and drizzle, chiefly in the west. England and Wales will be generally overcast and grey with a little rain, mainly in west Wales and eastern England this morning. It will be mild but rather breezy, with strong south-westerly winds in

many northern and western areas. Tomorrow will be mild but breezy, with rain in the north west clearing to brighter spells and showers. Elsewhere it will be cloudy, with rain in western areas slowly edging east, although the south-east should stay dry. On Monday, many places will be dry, although there will be some drizzle on western coasts. Tuesday will bring more rain to the north and west, with wet and windy weather reaching all areas on Wednesday. The unsettled but mild spell is

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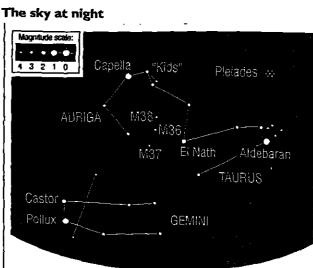
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Atlantic chart, noon today

Out and about with AA Road-watch rail 0335 401 to me lated local and national ratific news Source The Automo-bie Association Calls charged at 199 per mini (cheap nate) 499 per unni rail other times indi-vant. Sun and moon



The constellation Auriga can currently be seen at any time during the night. It is next to Taurus and Gemini, and highlighted by the brilliant yellow star Capella.

If not quite so well known as its zodiacal neighbours, Taurus and Gemini. Auriga the Charioteer is nonetheless one of the great constellations of the winter sky and is currently well up all night long. Sunny vellow Capella, its prime star, ranks seventh brightest in the sky. Since Capella roughly translates to the little nanny goat', an adjacent trio a dimmer stars are familiarly dubbed 'the kids'. Auriga is obliged to share its second brightest star with Taurus, El Nath, which marks one of the Bull's horns, is designated Beta Tauri as well as Gamma Aurigae. Auriga's patch is one of those sky areas definitely worth a sweep with binoculars. Three well known star clusters lurk just below the limit of naked-eye visibility. The 18th-century comet hunter. Charles Messier, listed them 36, 37 and 38 in his celebrated catalogue of fuzzy objects. M38 is somewhat dimmer and more diffuse than the other two.

Jacqueline Mitton

3/EUROPE



OMEN WRESTLERS eir capitals). eir caphais).
What's more, the contains fight in POOLS
LED WITH MUDOR DE NON-STOP STRIP ASE, which may also be formed at your table a H individual reques 12. Malvan, courselfed indector tacking than the E REAL OLD IN SOIL (LARRIDA) on ask in your column

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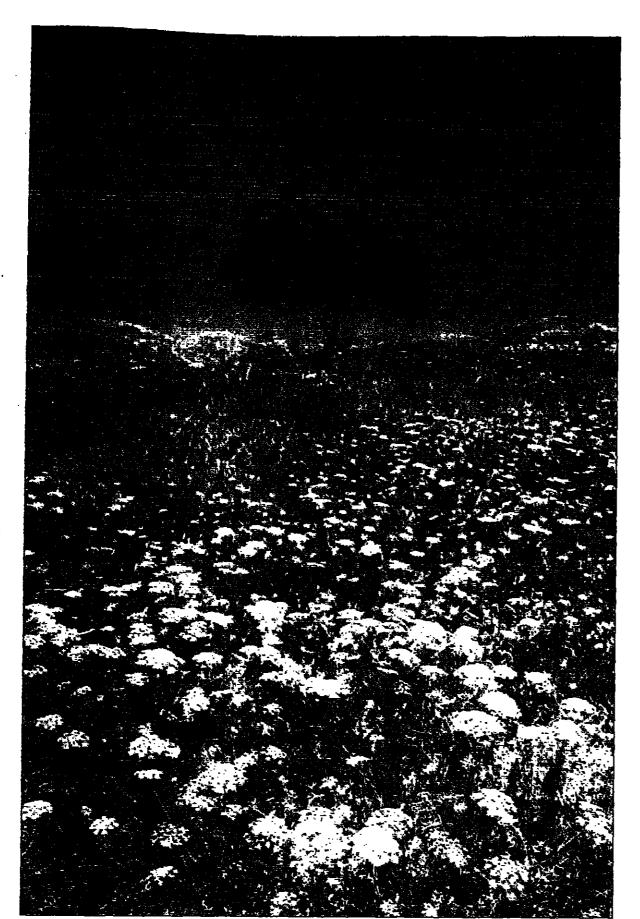
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onwards. WORLDCOVER



Spain: get the picture?

An Andalucian holiday with a focus sounded a perfect combination. Rupert Sagar-Musgrave set out to capture it all on camera.

The idea of a working holiday appealed, Nothing so strenuous as a kibbutz, or helping replant trees in the rainforest. That would be too much like hard work. No, why not extend my own area of work with a holiday? As a semi-professional photographer, a workshop at Los Pinos, the only English-run photography centre in Spain. scemed to combine the perfect ingredients. If you are one of those people who annoys everybody else by spending hours trying to get the perfect shot, then this is the holiday for you - and nobody will complain. I dusted off my lenses, invested in a mountain of film, and arrived in Andalucia for a holiday that I could finally justify,

By the time I surfaced on the first morning, the group was already getting acquainted over coffee in the library. This was not to be a holiday for the leisurely. Having disturbed my roommate by stumbling in at 3am, due to a "delay of inbound aircraft" at Gatwick. I now headed for the only familiar face among the group and apologised. Norman had flown in from Brussels and this was his second holiday here, which seemed to be just the sort of active recommendation that a newcomer needed,

Los Pinos, as the name suggests, is peacefully situated among pine trees on the edge of the Sierra Almijara, close to Competa. As I wandered through the garden towards the library, the view stretched away down the Torrox valley to the Mediterranean, the Costas, and beyond to the Rif Mountains of North Africa, The warm breeze was scented with pine and wild rosemary.

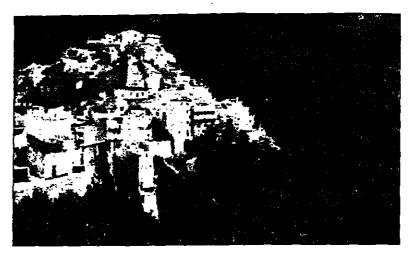
Each course caters for groups of up to 15 people, though ours was a very manageable seven. We spanned all ages and professions, from a therapist in her late twenties, to a middle-aged accountant, and a retired expatriate. The only common factor was a keen personal ambition to improve our photographic capabilities.

The guest host for our workshop, the landscape photographer Michael Busselle, gave an introductory talk, accompanied by his own stides to illustrate the theme for the week: "Colour landscape with a travel bias". The essence of the holiday was to spend the next six days exploring the enormous diversity of locations in the surrounding region. known enigmatically as Axarquia. Our subject matter was someupon. It was an experience of discovery, for nowhere looks the same twice, under changing skies and mercurial light.

Preconceptions can lead to disappointment but Andalucia matched up to the idyllic images conjured in my mind. Pueblos blancos, barren mountains, pots of geraniums, a goat herder tending his flock, a single olive tree surrounded by a carpet of purple flowers. "You want to put a warm-up filter on this one," Michael enthused, weaving through the obstacle course of tripods as the group congregated around yet another olive tree. Why is it that olive trees are so fascinating? Perhaps

times planned, sometimes just chanced again for their cameras, plastic plates and cups being tossed aside, before returning for a slice of watermelon.

The days were long. Sometimes we would stop to drop off films for processing at a shopping development down by the sea on our return to Los Pinos. The heavy traffic on the coastal road made a stark contrast to the now familiar deserted mountain tracks. But with cameras stowed and bodies weary, the only thing on our minds by late evening was supper. A small decanter of the local Competa wine was always kept topped up in my log-cabin room, which served as a welcome aperitif before we reconvened for a feast of tra-



In the frame: the landscape of Andalucia is as varied as it is photogenic Photographs: Rupert Sagar-Musgrave

it is the expression of age in their trunks, or their distorted forms. Even split in two with gaping bollows, they continue to grow

Each day we would clamber into a fourwheel drive and set off for a chosen spot invariably accompanied by the two dogs at Los Pinos. On arrival we would all spread out, and settle down to our own personal objectives, with Michael being on hand for practical advice on technique, equipment

Sometimes we would be so immersed in obtaining that perfect shot that lunch was forgotten until about three o'clock. Then suddenly a chorizo pasta salad with juicy tomatoes, roasted peppers, fresh olives and chunks of bread, miraculously appeared spread out on a tablecloth in the shade of a ubiquitous olive tree. Although refuelling was a high priority for everyone, the sight of a shepherd bringing his flock of goats down to the stream for a drink sent everyone scrambling or tellfax 0034 52 11 5355 (Spain).

ditional dishes superbly prepared each night by Sophia. This proved quite literally to be the driving force for us all.

The centre provides a relaxed environment for a photographic holiday. When it came to an open critique of the group's work on the final day, the results were impressive to say the least. Feedback is an integral part of the learning experience and sharing ideas with the other participants was equally beneficial.

Of course the degree of attendance and thus personal progress during the week is up to you. Just don't expect to improve your shots with a siesta by the pool.

Los Pinos runs workshops from February to November, hosted by some of the best known names in British photography. Prices start at £450 for one week. The nearest airport is Malaga, transfer time approximately one hour. For further details tel/fax 01386 841715 (UK),

PICTURE THIS

A combination of clear air, abundance of wilderness and the sun low on the horizon make midsummer in Newfoundland ideal for nature photography. Photo Travellers (01483 425448) includes the island in its programme of escorted photography courses. The two-week course takes place in July and costs £1,995. Other subjects for 1998 include Costa Rica, South India, US National Parks and walking in

The surreal scenery and wild coastline of County Clare is the setting for a series of art holidays run by the Burren College of Art (00 353 65 77200). The college is spectacularly located on the edge of the Burren just south of Ballyvaughan, on the west coast of Ireland, and offers courses on painting, drawing and photography. A botanical painting week in May costs £150, while a Beginning Photography weekend course is £75. Accommodation is extra, costing around £30 per day for full

Dillington House (01460 52427), near Chard in Somerset, is a council-run residential college offering weekend courses from October to June on all sorts of arts and crafts, including calligraphy and Japanese silk painting.

The ultimate contemporary guide for an artistic holiday in Spain must be the writer Michael Jacobs. He will be escorting a tour of Toledo and Madrid in April and October

A compendium of hazards facing today's traveller. This

the Gellert Hotel to its guests.

easily be snatched away from you.

buffet table.

week: safety tips for visitors to Budapest - as supplied by

Never leave your handbag unattended in the breakfast

● Do not take all your money with you when you go for a

walk. Carry your purse or wallet as close to your body as possible - preferably in an inside pocket that closes with a

● Always keep your handbag or shoulder bag closed and hold it towards the front of your body so that it cannot

Remember: even a locked boot and a secured parking

place are not a guarantee that no one will break into

■ If you drink alcohol you are not allowed to drive.

For foreign office advice on Hungary and many other

or 4504, or fax 0171-238 4545; on the Internet, at

countries, contact the Travel Advice Unit on 0171-238 4503

http://www.fco.gov.uk/ or on BBC-2 Ceefux from page 470

room or hotel restaurant, even when you go over to the

next year, on behalf of Martin Randall Travel (0181-742) 3355). The five-night holiday costs £845, with a single supplement of £70. The group size is limited to a maximum of 22. The same company arranges private visits to the Sistine Chapel (a privilege enjoyed yesterday by the Cuban President's brother, Raul Castro), as part of some of its tours

The new Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao is included on a Spanish itinerary from ACE Study Tours (01223 835055) in May; a week costs £875. The company is also running a summer tour of Finnish art and architecture. Besides Helsinki, the trip includes visits to the timber town of Porvoo and the city of Turku.

In south-western France, a British-run visual studies centre called Atelier de la Rose (00 33 5 65 24 66 36) offers summer schooling in drawing, painting and photography. Nonparticipating partners can stay free of charge.

The throughly updated 1998 Painting Holiday Directory is published on Monday, price £4.75 including postage. It is available from some bookshops or direct from PHD Publications, PO Box 1, Ponteland, Newcastle NE19 2EB (01830 540215).

GREEN CHANNEL

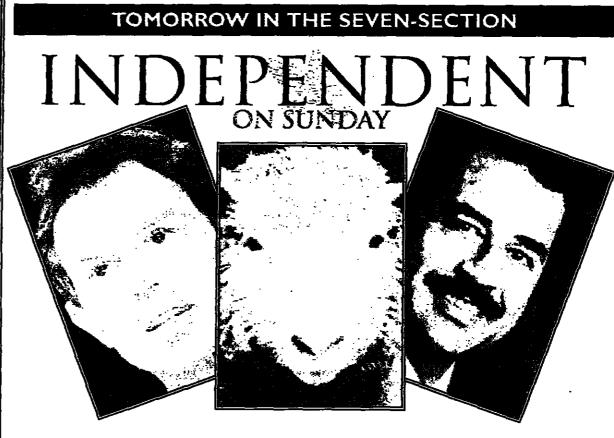
If you cat organic food in the air (as you do on Swissair flights) are you being environmentally-friendly? Well ... even accounting for the environmental benefits of organic farming, air travel is increasing at such a dramatic rate that unfortunately no amount of organic sandwiches will stop the damage aeroplanes are causing in terms of elimate change.

As more and more of us get a taste for the delights of travel (there are likely to be 1.6 billion of us exploring the globe by 2020), carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from aircraft are escalating. Friends of the Earth point out that despite technological improvements making aircraft "greener", by 2015 planes are expected to double their current contribution of 3-5 per cent of the global greenhouse effect and could cause half of the annual destruction of the ozone layer.

But, as anyone who has compared rail and air travel prices to Ireland, Paris or Brussels will know, air is often cheaper. All but the richest environmentalists are consequently deterred from choosing rail over plane on short-haul journeys. And when it is cheaper to fly to the Caribbean than it is to fly to Europe it is no surprise that long-haul travel is booming.

The answer? It may not be a popular one, but Friends of the Earth suggests putting tax on air tickets, aircraft fuel and transport of goods by air - if car drivers pay tax on petrol, why should air travel be exempt?

As world leaders debate climate change this week and next at the UN Convention on Climate Change in Kyoto, the role of air travel should undoubtedly be considered. Friends of the Earth will be demonstrating at airports world-wide this weekend, campaigning for "The Right Price for Air Travel". For the traveller, it's a bitter pill to swallow, as it will increase the price of our holidays, but it's likely to do more to save the world than eating organic food on aircraft will ever do.



What do Tony, Dolly, and Saddam have in common? Find out tomorrow

PLUS:

The Tatton Terrors - Neil and Christine Hamilton invite you into their lovely home

Sun Hill Superstars – the unusal suspects who have done their time in The Bill

Dressing up for Christmas - the essential guide to office party chic

Decriminalise cannabis - the latest news in the campaign that everyone is talking about

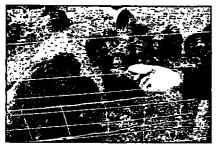
Among the chattering classes

Hey, hey with the monkeys - or at ions looked more robust as they waved their least the lemurs, capuchins and orang-utans. David Wilson visits Monkey World, in Dorset

The first thing you see in the 40-acre woodland park of Monkey World is a colony of lemurs. On the day we were there they were sprawling on their backs in the sunshine and displaying their long, bushy tails. They looked as if they'd just had a wild party.

When feeding-time comes they start to get frisky. During our visit, a male called Chewy dived out of his cage, dangled by one arm from an oak tree, then dropped to the ground and snuggled up to a member of

A keeper squirted water to shoo him away. Chewy then started dancing with a



female lemur, mirroring her movements. They grappled delicately, exchanging little kicks and cuffs. Meanwhile his tribe launched into a chorus like nothing we'd ever heard: a croaking roar that conjured up visions of the jungles of Madagascar. Thrilling.

The sanctuary's other species are less anarchic, more under control; but they by no means resemble prisoners. They seem at ease in their enclosures. Very few show any signs of stress: no pacing, twitching or despondent brooding. The reason is that, as the keepers emphasise, every primate gets us all. treated as an individual.

Many have been rescued from frightening predicaments. The macaques came from a laboratory where they were used in contraceptives testing. One of them, Shaky. tends to tremble as a result. Her compan- more to the place than that.

big. pink behinds to attract the male - who yawned, displaying his fangs.

The keeper interpreted: "He's telling me 'Stay away from my harem ...' and quite honestly he's welcome to them."

The slender capuchins are more approachable. One was rescued in Rolf Harris's Animal Hospital. Amazingly, in America they themselves are sometimes employed as nurses for paralysed people, performing such tasks as feeding and lifting the telephone.

Above all, what we sensed in the straw-sweetened air of Monkey World was the tenderness of primates. The two orangutans, Ami and Banji, sat locked in a seemingly interminable embrace that made us a touch misty-eved.

By contrast the male chimps displayed vigour and machismo. They somersaulted and beat their chests. One of their enclosures, a pyramid structure, was built by the Challenge Anneka team in just three days.

As well as the living attractions the centre also features a climbing-net where children keenly mimic the monkeys. Anyone needing still more stimulation may try the mini-motorbikes, slides, swings and assault course

Suzy Bell from Kensington, south west London, took her children, Lucy, seven, and William, five.

particularly interested in the trip. I had the impression that monkeys are grim and ugly creatures. But I really got into it. We'd planned to spend two hours. In the end we were there for four. It's just the right size.

I didn't realise monkeys had such human faces, and yet all that fur. It's ecrie. I found the orang-utans incredibly graceful, as if they were moving in slow motion. They're also very gentle - an example to

I thought all the staff were charming, and of course Chewy was adorable. I wanted to take him home. I wonder why there's so much stress on the chimps, in the advertising and on the T-shirts and so on. There's



Planet of the apes: as the keepers emphasise, every primate gets treated as an individual

Photographs: John Lawrence

Suzy: To be honest, to begin with I wasn't Lucy: I watch lots of nature programmes. Normally they have monkeys in them. I liked the monkey (a capuchin) that can look after you when you're older. Granny should

> I also liked Chewy. He looked like he was wearing a cardigan. His tongue was very soft. Gibbons are pretty - all fluffy and cuddly - or was it orang-utans."

We bought a toy monkey to go with my penguin, Pip. I'd like a real monkey. Mummy says we can't.

William: The best bit was Chewy. I wanted to cuddle Chewy. I have seen lions. Monkeys are nicer than lions. Monkey World is more fun than a museum. Chimpanzees

Getting there: Monkey World is in Longthoms, near Wareham, Dorset (freephone 0800 450000). By car it is a few miles north of the A352 between Wool and Wareham: by train it is a £3 taxi each way (0800 ooo 666) from Wool station.

Opening times: daily, 10am-5pm. Admission: £4.75 adults. £2.75 children. £3.25 senior citizens and disabled, £13 family ticket (two adults and two children). Support: you can adopt a primate and receive its photograph, an adoption certificate, The Ape Rescue Chronicle, and a free one-year season ticket to Monkey World. For information on the campaign to save chimps from BSE experiments, contact Monkey World.

PITSTOP

A few miles away from Monkey World you can stop for refreshments and a view of the brooding ruins of Corfe Castle. The National Trust Tea Room (01929 481332) at The Square. Corfe Castle, serves coffee and various cakes from 1 Iam, then at lunch time come home-made soup (always vegetarian), sandwiches, quiche and salad, and filled jacket potatoes, as well as a few hot specials. Choices for afternoon tea include the Dorset cream tea with local home-made jam, and the Purbeck tea comprising two slices of locally baked bread, jam and a choice of cakes. There's a roast on Sundays, and they're happy to cater for young children, with two high-chairs, children's cups, bottles, small portions and a short children's menu.

From the Egon Ronay guide 'And Children Come Too ...', Bookman, £9.99

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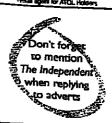
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Grande I alle og e THERE'S THE ALL AND THE Spirman of Assista · May Telefile II also 正靈 among the second Andrice of the first made MG (ZDC) Choose (TZE) taliana Taritana encial translation of As the galactic or a trade of the

वर्षेत्र हुन १८७५ वर्षेत्र स्ट $\mathbb{E}_{\mathbb{R}^{n}}(\mathbb{R}^{n}) = \mathbb{E}_{\mathbb{R}^{n}}(\mathbb{R}^{n})$ Why go now? Burn St. Committee Because the finest Spanish colo- $\rho_{\mathcal{C}}(r_{\mathcal{C}}, r_{\mathcal{C}}, r_{\mathcal{C}}) = \frac{1}{2} e^{-\frac{r_{\mathcal{C}}}{2} \frac{r_{\mathcal{C}}}{2} \frac{r_{\mathcal{C}}}$ nial city on earth is shining more Property of the second brightly this December than for a decade. Because you no Nichard Park 🎝 longer have to fly via Gander or East Berlin to get there. And, State I to the Arrest who knows, after four decades pograde production of revolution, it really could be times as a laborate Fidel Castro's last Christmas ... Beam down Cubana (0171-734 1165) flies

> Gatwick, using a DC-10. A fortnight from today it begins flying weekly from Manchester. Fares are high: around £500, including taxes. But you could also find a package tour, staying in the best hotels for around the same price. Be prepared for your flight to stop at Brussels, taking the journey time up to 12

hours. Taxis at the airport cost

around £10 into town.

three times a week from

For a short cut to the

capital, Michael Williams

soul of the Cuban

offers a guide.

Check in

After a trip like that, you don't want to be scouring the darkened streets of Old Havana for somewhere to stay. So try to book in advance. The budget option is the perennially cheerful and grotty Caribbean (00.53 7 62 2071) on the Prado. The smarter and more atmospherTop of the range is the new Hotel Santa Isabel, just opened in a converted palace on the lavishly restored Plaza de Armas

(00 537 33 8201). It costs around £90 for two. Get your bearings You could easily spend a week,

let alone a weekend, in the conspiratorial confines of Old Havana. But to see how it fits into the Revolutionary scheme of the whole, take a trip out to the western district of Miramar (where, pre-1959, the Mafia community hung out) and see the Model of the City, housed in a hangar on Calle 28 between Avenidas 1 and 3. An amazingly detailed wooden model gives an excellent overview of the entire capital, with each century colour coded to give an idea of the development of Havana.

Take a ride Almost anything that moves in Havana can be construed as a taxi. But from an aesthetic point of view, a pre-1959 American saloon (of which there are hundreds prowling the streets) is the only way to travel. You can pick up a dowager of Detroit around Parque Central or near the railway station. Fix your price with the driver first.

Literary interlude While you are queueing (get

ic Plaza (00-53-7-62-2066) or used to Cuban queues) for im-tral Havana. You can get a slab Inglaterra (00 53 7 62 7072) on migration, or changing money, of pizza in brown paper and an Parque Central, the main or simply waiting to be served ice-cream for eight pescs (30p). in a cafe re-read Graham Greene's Our Man In Havana. This comic tale of the vacuum cleaner salesman turned spy is

the perfect evocation of the Havana mood - the steamy heat, the sleaze and that indefinable sense of political danger. It was written in 1958, but half-close your eyes and it could just be happening in 1997. Take a hike

48 hours in the heart of Havana

From the main square, go east along Calle O'Reilly through deliciously complex layers of colonialism, Communism and community. Promenade around the Plaza de Armas, nod in the direction of Ernest Hemingway at the Ambos Mundos hotel (and toll the bell that stands opposite), then return along Calle Obispo. When you reach the main square at the end, loop back along Calle Obrapia. You can keep this up all morning, turning up all manner of curiosities - and being hissed at once per block by someone

Lunch on the run Havana is not a great city for people who lunch. Best bet is to stoke up on the lavish hotel breakfasts, though this year for the first time a fast(ish) food industry has emerged from the doorways of Old Havana and its seedier western neighbour. Cen-

an American U2 spy plane shot

Window shopping

Cuba is the perfect destination offering cheap cigars - or a girl. the bottom of Calle Obispo.

> An aperitif "My daiquiri in El Floridita," priciest bar in Havana: now it week. Instead, head for the raudown Obispo. You won't miss it. thromming through the door.

Cultural afternoon Fidel will be pleased if you call in at the Presidential Palace. Not his heavily guarded HQ. of course, but the residence of the dictator he deposed - Fulgencio Batista. This has become the Museum of the Revolution. repository of the heritage of Che Guevara and his compañeres. You can see not only such revolutionary essentials as Che's socks and his mistress's handhag, but also, in the gardens outside, the mangled wreckage of

down during the Cuban missile

for shopaholics to go cold turkey. You are free to browse. presupposing you can find a shop with (a) windows that aren't concealed by grubby net curtains, or (b) anything you might want in it. You will be offered countless eigars, but to avoid duds wait until you get to the airport on the way home. A good bet for a souvenir is to head for the quirky second-hand book market on Plaza de Armas, or some old postcards of historic Havana from the Office of the City Historian at to the front of the line.

Hemingway was fond of saving. But in the Fifties, it wasn't the charges more for a cocktail than the average Cuban carns in a cous La Lluvia del Oro, halfway because of the blast of salsa

Demure dinner Most restaurants serve dreary. standardised fare. Not surprising, since they are generally run by the state. But since 1994, entrepreneurs have been able to open private restaurants, palodan's, provided they don't seat more than 12 people. A good place to go is La Moneda, serving delicious fish with salad. beans and rice with fried banana for less than £5 a head. It is at San Ignacio 77, near the cathedraf, but get there early - there

are only three tables.



famous novel

Photographs: Tom Pilston

Graham Greene's

Steamy heat, sleaze and

that indefinable sense of

today could have come straight off the pages of

Sunday: go to church

A night at the opera Chris Smith may think he's on The Pope arrives next month, and religion is the big thing in to a good thing by reinventing Covent Garden as "the people's town. But you don't need to opera". But Fidel got there brave the bustle and crowds of first: £7.50 will buy you the best Cathedral Square. Head for seat in the house at the Gran the white Iglesia del Santo Teatro de la Habana, which Angel Custodio, on Monserrate, claims to be the oldest working near the waterfront. It nestles theatre in the world. The splenamong some of the loveliest did 2.000-sear barroque building streets of the old town - just the was opened in 1837. You won't place to lift the spirits. even have to queue for a seat. Respectful of culture-loving Bracing brunch tourists. Cubans will push you

The sun will be hot now, and it's time to cool off by the fountain

in the Moorish courtyard of the newly restored Hotel Sevilla. Take tapas here, with perhaps a mojito (ice, lime, mint and rum) to revive the spirits. (Mind the gents, though; it was here that Greene's hero, Wormald, was recruited into MI6).

Get a 1954 Chevvy to drive you to Hemingway's old villa at the Finca Vigia, 10 miles south of the city - Marie Celeste-like, the gleaming white house is just as

The old man and the sea

he left it when he departed from

Cuba in 1958, shortly before his suicide. With hunting trophies on the wall, whisky bottles at the ready and the table set for dinner, you expect the big man to walk in at any minute.

The icing on the cake Take the lift to the top of the newly opened (but not newly built) José Marti memorial on Revolution Square. Che Guevara smiles up at you while you survey the whole heroic mess that is the Caribbean's largest

and greatest city.

HIGH ROAD

For the past 32 years, the way to travel from Birmingham New Street to London Euston has been by InterCity train. The journey time has increased considerably in that period, from 83 minutes in the Seventies to 100 or more now that Virgin Trains runs the service, rather than British Rail. The tare for a day return, departing at around 9am, is £59,50 return; this falls to £24 after 9.30am. Details of this, and most other trains - but not the one below - from 0345 484950.

LOW ROAD

Silverlink County sounds like a brand of tennis racket, but is, in fact, the new name for the privatised North London Railways. It, too, runs trains between Birmingham and Euston, though they travel a slower, longer route via Northampton. - taking just over two hours.

A day-trip starting any time after 8.30am costs £17.90. and if four people travel together they pay a total of £28 just £7 each. Before 8.30am, though, the fare is a whacking £59,50. Find out more on 01923 207258.

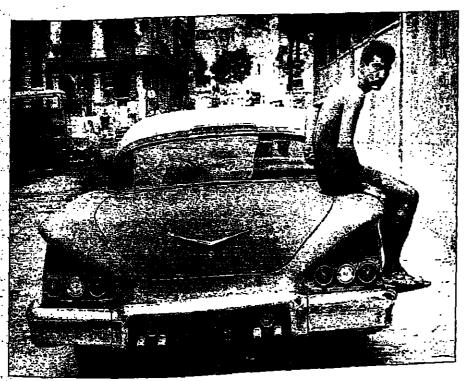
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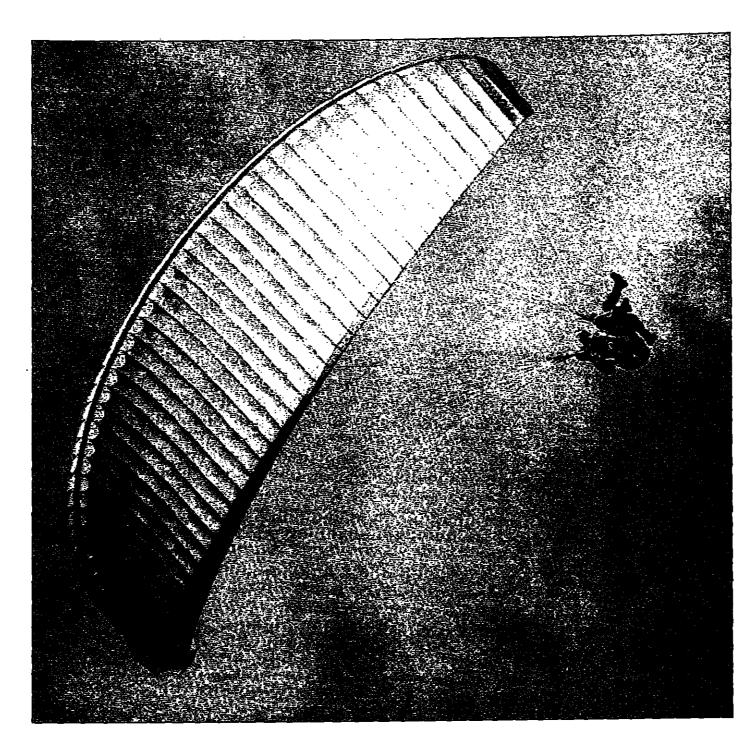
It sounds scary but simple: you just float off a mountain with a canopy billowing over your head. Anna Rockall goes parapenting at Courchevel.

Skiing off a mountain seemed an unwise idea. Not, you understand, skiing down it, though that can be scary enough; skiing off it into space, hovering over the valley below. You're attached to some kind of flotation aid, obviously, but none the less suspended almost a kilometre above the valley floor.

I had watched in envy from the slopes as multicoloured canopies had swooped gently in the blue heavens above the snowy peaks, twirling and rising on the thermals and putting us meagre skiers to earthbound shame. Such a calmly terrifying sport had to

The scene of the action was the Col de la Loze (already 2,300 metres high), above Courchevel in the French Alps, but the sport, known as parapente, is widely available throughout the French ski resorts. Unless you have some experience, you'll want to do this in tandem - once you are up in the air. there isn't a lot anyone can do to help you if you don't know what you are doing. My guide, Scrge, was a typical French ski instructor, with skin the colour of a lightly done steak, and a flirtatious streak. He harnessed me to a contraption that seemed to have far too few buckles, and then hooked himself up behind me. With his skis either side of mine, the silk canopy neatly laid out behind us and the safety checks duly done, we were ready to launch into the thin air.

defying couloir. Despite the fact that I felt comextreme corridor of doom. No fear of that - when on down until suddenly we seemed to be airborne. above the valley floor - and rising - peering down fly unmotorised, using the wind and thermals like 4 79 08 39 60.



50 yards, and then plummeted away into a death- down the slope for, ooh, about 5ft before we met with resistance from the canopy behind us, that had fortingly secure strapped up to Serge, I prayed we immediately filled with air and stood puffed up in would take off before we ended up sliding down the a billowing wall of silk. Slowly, very slowly, we skied

made it, and were floating gently away from the mountainside.

The slope we were on was gently skiable for about Serge gave the word, we let ourselves start moving Then suddenly we weren't, and then - hurrah - we between our skis at inordinate quantities of nothing. I felt safe.

The surprising thing about parapente is your abil-I was expecting to be terrified, but the fear is ity to defy gravity. It's not like parachuting, where

Skiing upwards: using the wind and thermal when you parapente you defy gravity and Photograph: Steve Godfrey

a bird. The guide used strings to control the angle of the canopy, and before we knew it we were circling higher than all the surrounding mountains. The views, of course, were a bit special, though once I had begun to relax my death grip on Serge's leg I became rather more aware of the cold. It was considerably chillier than the mountainside, so fear of falling was quickly replaced by fear of losing my extremities to frostbite.

The other unexpected (and uncool) problem was airsickness. It hadn't even occurred to me that I could get airsick while risking life and limb, but the gentle, swaying motion, compounded with the odd bumpiness when we hit a thermal, all added up to a worrying bout of nausea. Understandably concerned at the prospect of my throwing up all over his equipment, Serge brought us down after a meagre five minutes (the normal flight time being 10 minutes). As we descended, all worries about high-altitude vomiting faded into insignificance beside the fear of not landing in one piece. The cables of the chairlift looked threateningly in the way, and I had to close my eyes as we swooped just above them, avoiding an undignified death by millimetres (honest).

The ground started coming up rather more quickly than I expected, and before there was time to get concerned about broken ankles or whatever else might happen, we landed with an ungainly thump. I promptly fell over backwards, and struggled to my feet with the grace of a pregnant duck. But despite the fear, the airsickness and the cold, once safely down I longed to be floating dreamily above the peaks again. Skiing away down the mountain I felt drearily earthbound, once more a slave to the laws of gravity.

Anna Rockall paid FF450 (about £45) for a parapenting session at Col de la Loze. Courchevel 1850, all in the anticipation. Although we seemed miles you simply fall very slowly: you actually ascend and France, For more details call Chardon Loisirs 00 33

Skis as baggage: what a carry-on

All the big six ski operators now make a charge of £12 or £13 for checking skis and snowboards on to their charter flights. Why? asks Stephen Wood.

Skiers, says Paul Carter, are not the sort of people "who judge a holiday just by its £299 brochure price". Mr Carter is head of marketing at Crystal Holidays, Britain's biggest ski operator, so he is familiar with customers who consider the cost of all the extras. And when he's asked why skiers must pay extra to have their skis carried on a charter flight, he's ready with his defence.

If you've been skiing for a few years, you will remember the time when skis were redon't should not."

garded as luggage, and travelled odd kilos. And you will have noticed, creeping into the small print of the brochures, a paragraph that normally starts "with a growing number of skiers and snowboarders taking their own equipment on holiday ..." and ends with your having to

reach into your pocket. Paul Carter's argument goes like this, "Scheduled airlines will tell you that in-flight meals are free," he says. "But of course that isn't true: the cost of the meals is simply included in the cost of the ticket. There is a cost to us in carrying skis and snowboards, because they involve extra handling costs and add weight to the plane - which increases fuel consumption. And our view is this: that those who benefit from a service should pay for it, and those who

sengers) take their skis and snowboards without charge. But when it runs a charter £13 charge which does, in Crysflight, it hires a plane (with a full specific flight, and pays a fee to cover all the costs of the charter airline. Crystal doesn't pay separately for fuel or baggage handling; they are, like airline meals, included in the price of price will reflect those increasing costs, says Paul Carter, it's reasonable that those who push them up should pay up: "So rather than spread the extra cost of carriage among all the passengers, we just charge those who have taken their skis and

who can (like the other pas-

snowboards with them." Fair enough? Not quite. The

On scheduled flights, Crys- gers are attempting to get into ter how much luggage there was may not carry much face value. sary, skis will be provided for e aircraft hold has increased to be loaded. the chances of this luggage having to be off-loaded from charter flights; hence the £12-

tal's words. "improve the tank of fuel) and a crew for a reliability of carriage". But when I asked whether ski equipment often has to be off-loaded. Gary Greenwood, operations manager of Gatwick Handling. said that "it's a rare occurrence, although it does happen. the plane. But since the hire particularly with smaller planes". Such as the Boeing 737? No, Mr Greenwood's examples were the BAC 1-11 and the BAe 146, planes that are too small to be used on any normal skiing charter.

And did Gatwick Handling charge a charter airline more for humping a lot of boards and skis on to a plane? No, said Mr operators claim that the bulk of Greenwood; they charged a boards and skis which passen- flat fee for the plane, no mat-

charter-flight fuel charges. Britannia Airlines was unhelpful. straightforward: a spokesperson said that airline charter costs ter companies and the tour opdiscuss with other people". But her exposition of fuel charges was simple: every acroplane has a maximum payload, and a charter airline would have to be very stupid, when working out the fuel costs for a trip, not to assume that the plane would be fully loaded. So there was no likelihood that the hire charge would be increased for extraboards and skis. Could I quote the spokesperson on that? "I'd

rather you didn't," she said. ication of the carriage charge pill by promising that, if neces-

it is sound; those passengers tak- vou free of charge at the resort When I enquired about ing skis or a board are responsible for a higher proportion of son even guarantees that the the fuel consumption and air-Monarch, however, was quite port hassle than those who do not, so charging them a higher ticket price is justifiable. And were "something that the char- answay. Crystal isn't doing anything that the other big opercrators don't usually like to ators don't (except charging £l more for carriage, something that Paul Carter says "will have

to be looked at next year"). The deal offered is this: you pay the carriage fee, and your board or skis will arrive at your destination at the same time as you do. Or not. If they don't - if you pay for a service and it expect is to get your money back; but Neilson and First

until your own arrive (and Neilreplacements will be "quality

But one operator's offer is unique. The small print in the Airtours brochure looks familiar, promising as it does that boards or skis for which the carriage fee of £12 per person has been paid will, if they cannot be checked on to their owner's flight, be "immediately placed on the next aircraft and trans-

ferred to your resort". So why isn't a refund mentioned? Because it isn't paid: turn up. your fee will be re- amazingly, Airtours keeps the funded. This isn't a great offer carriage fee even when your equipment fails to turn up. If is not delivered, the least you you are not the kind of person who judges a holiday just by its £299 brochure price, you may But if Paul Carter's justif- Choice sweeten the expensive wonder whether that £12 fee is

To increase the tempo of your short turns imagine that you are bouncing on a trampoline. Feel the pressure build up under your feet and then release. Make this the tempo of your turning as you start skiing.

Chris Exall





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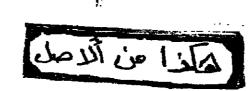
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Knowing Alan Partridge, knowing Norwich

East Anglia's most famous Actional son is a frighteningly real creation, so real that Andy Bull decided to construct a Fartridge-themed tour of the city that spawned him. Here's an Partridge, and this is his Forwich, Ah-ha

Herwich is where Alan Partridge learnt his preadcasting craft - on Hospital Radio Norwich, where his chat show Knowing Me, herewing You was beamed to the nation before being unceremoniously axed by the BBC, and where he now works, on Radio Norwich, filling the "key" 4.30am to 7am ·loc with a show imaginatively entitled "Up with the Partridge". His new role is the subect of the fly-on-the-wall documentary I'm Alen Furtridge, on BBC2 on Monday nights.

Perhaps we ought, at the outset, to draw ine dividing line between fact and fiction. Alan Partridge is a creation of Steve Toogan, Radio Norwich does not exist, and the current show is not filmed in the city. 3u! Partridge is a frighteningly believable creation, and the Norwich of our collecthe memory may well deserve to have him 环 its most famous son. At the Norfolk Tourist Authority they

admit that Partridge has boosted interest in the city. Officially, they think it is all "great fun", as they do at the city's reallife radio station, Radio Norfolk, Privatety, the city fathers must be wondering what on earth Norwich has done to be lampouned in this way. After all, it is what it says on the signs they have at the boundries: "Norwich: a fine city".

To amplify, Norwich is a fine medieval ity, largely unspoilt, which has an imposing Norman castle, a cathedral with a spire second in height only to Salisbury's, no less than 32 ancient churches (more than any other city centre in western Europe) and maze of largely pedestrianised streets filled with a varied array of little shops. It's as fine an example of a county town as you are likely to find.

But Partridge is not really a city centre whom. His world, the world of Pringle aveaters, Rover 800s, hotels with names like the Linton Travel Tayern which boast a really excellent carvery, and select developments of mock Tudor palace-ettes, exists



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I'm Norwich (left), and I'm Alan Partridge (right) Hain photograph John Voos

With its neighbouring Fina service station and Little Chef it looks at first as if it could provide all the creature comforts.

But a perceptive potential guest like Partridge would notice almost immediately the giant electricity pylon that stands four square on the front lawn, and which was fizzing loudly in the rain as I arrived, like an amplified equivalent of Norman Bates's buzzing neon Vacancy sign in Psycho. The rooms do have some of the required Partridge ambience. On the walls are semi-abstact prints of wild untained beaches that bring to mind the picture he owns of two white horses frolicking in the surf, and which makes him wonder: "Who owns those horses? And why aren't they saddled?"

Yet it's not enough. The Post House off the ring road on Hall Road also looks promising. It's right across from the Catthe Market. This is worth a visit if only to gain an understanding of what a minefield Partridge was stepping into when he ventured a comment on agricultural issues. You learn here that eows are more complicated than you might think. For of the row of yellow brick bunker-like buildings in which livestock is bought and sold, one is labelled, plainly and simply, Pig Sale, But there is no simple label for cows, instead you get Calf Sale Ring, Store Cattle Sale Ring, Dairy Sale Ring and Fat Cattle Sale Ring, all in their own separate buildings.

How easy it would be for a man more at home in Bally slip-ons - made in Norwich and available cut price from the factory outlet just up Hall Road - than green wellies to put his foot in it. You might admire a man's fat cattle, only to be told that they are dairy, and how dare you.

Right at the end are sheep, where a group of men who look like they have been left out in the rain for a year or two cluster round a bloke with a clipboard who stands between the pens and mumbles rapidly, while they either make dismissive gestures or nod. Beside me a woman was saying to two men, "You should get into sheep. Sheep people are awfully nice,"

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No, the perfect hotel is the Stakis Norwich Hotel, which you get to by driving round the A140 ring road to the north of the city, passing on the way the West Norwich hospital (on your right behind a graveyard), home of Hospital of Norwich, birthplace of Partridge. The Stakis, with its inimitable Greco-Scottish ambience, is at the airport, up Cromer Road just past the Mann and Egerton Rover dealership.

You know the Stakis is right for Partridge immediately the automatic door admits you to the lobby. The first thing that catches your eye is a portrait of the Queen, looking regal in powder blue. The lobby is double height, panelled in dark wood, with a seat curved around a statue of a nymph in the centre. Sheer class.

The carvery offers an authentic Partridge dining experience. To start your meal, maybe the Southern Fried Jacket Potato Wedges and Mushroom Combo



with Spicy Mayonnaise Dips? Or perhaps the Tandoori style Babyback Pork Ribs basted in Honey? Then on to your choice from the Roast/ Hot Dishes from the buffet. "No extra charge for those who would like seconds!"

Only one slight niggle. Re the piped music. TLC's Crazy Sery Cool is great in the disco, but over Cheesy Baked Stilton Mushrooms? I don't think so.

Yet while the suburbs are perfect Partridge-land, the city centre should not be dismissed. There is the shopping for a start. Partridge would be impressed by the Castle Mall precinct, the perfect leisure-shopping location for sports-casual man. It's a bit like shopping at Gatwick Airport but without the comfort of knowing you will be flying off on holiday very shortly.

The pedestrianised streets to the west of the castle are worth a browse. I saw a

very nice pair of tan leather and string driving gloves in Chadds For Fine Clothes in Bedford Street for £49.95. Pringle sweaters are surprisingly hard to find. They have a few at Pilch Intersport in Brigg Street, but they are the showier numbers in the Faldo Golf range.
I did ask at the tourist authority for sug-

gestions for my Alan Partridge itinerary, but they were very nervous. They run a shop in the old Guildhall, one of the many spectacular buildings in Norwich, which is packed with leaflets. I think Alan would go for one called "Where to Park in Norwich".

In the end they came up with one or two ideas. He had bad feet, didn't he? How about a trip to the Coleman's Mustard shop in Bridewell Alley for a mustard foot bath? I asked the tourist people about trips round the Norwich factory of Nestle Rowntree, makers of Partridge's favourite confectionery, the Terry's Chocolate Orange. But it turned out the factory closed last December, axing 700 jobs.

The historic sights can also have their Partridge moments, Before I left I popped into one of the finest of Norwich's medieval churches. St Peter Mancroft, beside the market place, is remarkably bright and airy, with huge clear-glass windows reaching up to the hammerbeam roof. Partridge would be most impressed, though, by the Flemish tapestry they keep behind a protective curtain that dates from 1573 and which portrays the Resurrection appearances of Christ. It depicts him as a gardener and ("rather too literally" according to the guide book) wearing a gardener's hat. The lady who showed me it said that this is one of only two pictures in Britain in which Christ is shown wearing a hat. The other is in Anglesea. Alan would like that.

Still searching for a gift for the Alan in your life? Stakis Hotels (0990 909090) is offering "A Christmas gift you'll always remember" at the Stakis in Norwich, or one of 38 other locations - including Glasgow and Edinburgh airports. For £99 two people get two nights dinner, bed and breakfast, you buy the voucher, which arrives "in a sman presentation wallet". After 27 December, the recipient phones to book the room between I January and 31 March.

Norwich tourist information: 01603 666071. I'm Alan Partridge is on BBC-2 at 10pm on

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9/FOOTSTEPS

Seeking truth under the volcano

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"Two mountain chains traverse the republic roughly from north to south, forming hetween them a number of valleys and plateaux. Overlooking one of these valleys, which is dominated by two volcanoes, lies, 6,000ft above sea level, the town of Quauahnahuac." So begins Malcolm Lowry's Under the Volcano, a novel about the last day in the life of the imaginary ex-Consul, Geoffrey Firmin, an awesome tale of drink-sodden damnation and symbolic doom. Its very words sent shivers down my spine in the unlikely surroundings of the No 239 North Vancouver bus heading towards the less-than-infernalsounding Deep Cove.

I had always wanted to visit the place where Lowry wrote Under the Volcano, and also the real-life version of the novel's location. The fact that one of them lay in British Columbia and the other was a small town about an hour's drive south of Mexico City, didn't seem to matter; I needed to see them both, preferably on the same trip. So armed with the two main biographies of Lowry, I based myself in Vancouver and began the trail that I hoped would lead me to what remained, if anything, of the shack where he wrote his most famous novel.

Lowry and his volcano were conspicuously absent from -- Vancouver's guide loved, self-built landing-stage? books. Even Dollarton, the hamlet where he lived from sign of the Shell logo. Images 1940 to 1954, didn't seem to of Lowry's life swarmed

TEL: 0171 293 2222

knowledge that his shack had been on the north side of Burrard Inlet, near a place called Indian Arm, I set off across Vancouver Harbour on one of the regular ferries to the city's northern shore. I also had in mind a memorably Lowryan vision of a Shell oil refinery, minus its S, blinking infernally opposite the shack. Another clue was the existence of a road called Dollarton Highway, even if there was no sign of Dollarton it its end.

Once in North Vancouver, I caught a bus west to Phibbs Interchange, then another heading along the highway. On the No 239, I asked the driver if he could help me in my quest. He'd never heard of Lowry, or the existence of some fishermen's shacks along the shore. But he said there was a development that had been built about 30 years ago, called Cates Park, and that every summer there was a local music festival called "Under the Volcano".

And so I found myself heading past barbecue tables to the farthest end of Cates Park, There to my amazement was a huge sign that said "Malcolm Lowry Walk" and a map as if drawn by a hasty child which marked the spot of Lowry's shack with a bold X. I followed the path, which ducked into the wood and ran parallel to the inlet. After a few yards, a boulder lay to the side of the track, noting my man's existence here. or at least a few yards along the

euphoria and grinning idiocy took over. A rise of stones leading into the water; might that not be Lowry's much There was the refinery, but no

After a few moments sani-On the beach, a mixture of

keep the place peaceful. Back in Vancouver itself, guided by fate and the basic a rock to perch on, and taking expanse of the University of ing a bottle of gin.



On the trail of Lowry: the author might have lived near Vancouver, but both he and his most famous novel, 'Under the Volcano', are Photograph: Jeff Vinnick/Reuters conspicuously absent from the city's guide books.

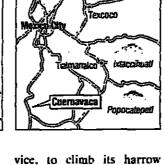
out Douglas Day's biography I looked at all the pictures of Lowry and his wife, Margerie. ludicrously trying to spot where such and such a picture had been taken.

ty took hold. In truth, there is little sign of where the shack was. Lowry's pier, which had allowed him to dive straight into the deep waters of the inlet, had been destroyed before even the cottages themselves had gone, more than 30 years ago. The area these days is a highly select suburb of North Vancouver. The only modernday acknowledgement is that Park Lane in Deep Cove was renamed Lowry Lane. In Lowry's time the remoteness of the shacks allowed him to work undisturbed; nowadays, the area relies on bordes of Neighhourhood Watch schemes to

the Lowry crusader needs to ther trin – to the vast



British Columbia. Here the Cuernavaca is a long way UBC library is home to an from Vancouver. Quauharchive of goodies about the nahuac's real life counterpart lies on the motorway from writer. Seeing that Lowry was Mexico City to Acapulco, on nearly always rude about Canada, this seems to me to be a show the south side of the volcanoes. of extraordinary generosity of Popacatapetl and Iztaccihuati, spirit on BC's behalf. You'll need that gave Lowry his novel's tito show some reason for wanttle. It was - and to some extent ing to see the collection, but in still is - an affluent commuter it you'll find such famous Lowrytown for those who can afford a weekend home away from ana as sheet music of his songs, and innumerable letters, Mexico City. But Cuernavaca manuscripts and photos, inis no Deep Cove. Its tight cluding my favourite; one of an streets are filled with slow, rinning Lowry clutchque huses strugg after an eternity of public ser- in during his time in Cuer- lived, and where Lowry staved HarperCollins, 1993.



ravines. The zocalo, or town square, is small and busy. While I was there, it was filled with protesters seeking better rights for Mexico's indigenous One thing it did have in common with Vancouver was its tourist board's complete igno-

rance of anything to do with ei-

ther Lowry or his novel. So it

was back to the biographies. and a map that I'd torn out of the hotel telephone directory. The house that Lowry lived

to Cuernavaca with his second wife, Margerie, in December 1945. The hotel also overlooks the ravine where the Consul's body is dumped along with one of the novel's ubiquitous pariah dogs. Other locations from the book abound. There is the Casino de la Selva; derelict in the novel, rebuilt and then left to ruin once more in real life. There is the Jardin Borda and the unsigned brown swinging doors of the town's forbidding Cantinas, now covered in posters of wet gringo girls in wet Tshirts. Visiting the locations for

when he inadvisedly returned

books and films risks the disappointment of reality. Works of imagination are altered by the passage of time, sometimes beyond recognition. But more often than not it's a joy to be somewhere that once existed solely on the pages of a book, but now stands before your very eyes. And my journey was more than a visit - it felt like a pilgrimage.

Malcolm Senior paid £583 for an "open-jaw" return on British Airways - flying from Heathrow to Vancouver, returning from Mexico City to Gatwick, booked through Airline Network (01772 727272) in Preston. He travelled between the two cities by bus, train and plane.

In Vancouver he paid \$149 per night (about £70) at the Downtown Best Western (00 1 604 669 9888) and in Cuernavaca he staved at Las Mananitas for 630 pesos a night – about £50, but well worth it (00 73 14 14 66). The rate for Hoseems reasonable to believe tel Bajo El Volcan is 256 pesos a night (00 73 12 48 73). Malcolm Lowry by Douglas

Apart from its name, the Day is published by Oxford Unihotel also has a role in our tale. versity Press, 1984 (now out of Part of it is the tower where print) and Pursued by Furies by the character Jacoues Larnelle Gordon Bowker is published by

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THIS YEAR



navaca, and the one that the

Consul inhabits in the novel.

was on a small street called

Calle Humboldt - in the nov-

el, Calle Nicaragua. At the

time it was a quiet parallel to

the main drag through the

town, but now it's almost as

busy. Among the biographers.

there's a difference of opinion

about precisely which house

Lowry and his first wife, Jan.

lived in. Douglas Day has them

at number 15; Gordon Bowk-

er at number 62. The reason for

this became apparent to me af-

ter one of the staff in the ap-

propriately named Hotel Baja

El Volcan told me that the

houses on Calle Humboldt

were constantly being

renumbered, and certainly not

sequentially. Either way, it

that the house doesn't exist any

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<u>جند</u> ہیں۔ بند کرہ

What sort of tree should you buy - and how do you dispose of it once the lights go out? Tom Barber advises.

Christmas trees are a boom market. The threatened takeover by glitzy plastic jobs seems to have receded, and the comforting tradition (even though Germanic in origin) of using a real tree has re-asserted itself. Over the past few years reaching a peak of five million last year. All but 7 per cent of these were home-grown, an enterprise requiring an amazing 2,000 acres of land.

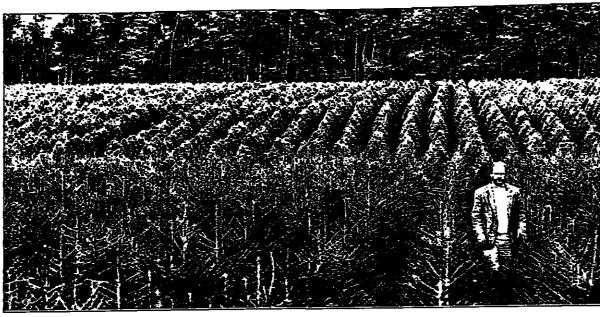
Choice has also expanded. For decades a Christmas tree meant a Norway spruce, picea abies. It still accounts for around other contenders are eating into its one-time monopoly. The great failing of the Norway spruce is a tendency to part with its needles - a trifling 150,000

a greater reluctance to shed their clothing are the Nordmann and Noble firs. But they are both slower growing, so more expensive. They also lack that evocative resinous scent that seems half the point of having the tree in the house in the first place. The only other species you are likely to meet is the Scots pine, which fits the bill admirably as long as it's been encouraged to bush out by dipping.

When choosing a tree, be

sure to look at the needles and

disregard anything that looks as sales have grown steadily, if it has begun to dry out. Size is obviously down to pocket, accommodation and inclination, but unless you are looking to create a particularly bizarre effect. choose a bushy tree with well spaced branches. Perhaps the most fun, especially with kids is to go to one of the number of "pick your own" enterprises. For two thirds of the total sold, but a list of outlets send a stamped, addressed envelope to the British Christmas Tree Growers Association, 12 Lauriston Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 4TQ. They also produce a useful leaflet about getting the best from your Christmas tree.



As fir as the eye can see: 12,000 acres are required to grow the trees sold in Britain.

Isn't it

at ground level, but there is an increasing trend towards supplying trees with roots attached. They are more expensive, and I reasons: the belief that trees with

Most trees are simply cut off roots will shed less needles, and treated considerately and given people seem to want their tree the prospect of subsequently a supply of water. Cut off a couplanting the tree in the garden. ple of centimetres from the base Neither of these thoughts and leave the tree standing in a stands up to much scrutiny. A cut bucket of water, just as you suspect people buy them for two tree will retain its needles just as would do a bunch of flowers. Yet an amazing number of or containerised (dug up from est no Christmas tree is ever gowell as one with roots, if it is

Markand Carol, Helen

to have an after-life in the garden. While it is true that a cut tree stands no chance of survival, the

When the tree is wrenched from not good, especially after two ered in tinsel and baubles.

science that sees binning a tree as a cardinal sin. I'm all for reprotecting endangered natural habitats - but Christmas trees are just not like that. They are, flowers; planted and harvested beit over a few years rather than a single season.

Nothing of value is destroyed to accommodate them, and their cultivation is probably less environmentally damaging than the arable crop that might have been growing in their place. So I see nothing wrong in buying a new Christmas tree every year outlook for one with roots, be it and simply discarding it after the hare rooted, wrapped in sacking allotted time. And let's be hon-

open ground and then stuffed ing to make a particularly valuinto a pot) is not much better. able addition to the garden.

'A shot in t

However, if you're still dcopen ground, most of the roots termined to grow one afterare left behind and so its chances wards, then buy a container of establishing successfully are grown tree (as opposed to a containerised one) that has spent is weeks in a heated room, smoth- life in a pot, and plant it out in open ground. If the real goal is Perhaps the wish to plant out to save money and become self the tree arises in part from a sufficient in Christmas trees, misplaced environmental con- your best bet is plant a dozen or so young saplings in an out-ofthe-way spot in the garden and ducing consumer waste and harvest them when they have reached the desired height.

If you're buying a cut tree, perhaps the best way of asin truth, a crop like barley or cut suaging any green guilt you may carry is to dispose of the as part of a renewable cycle, al- corpse conscientiously. What better than shredding it so it can be returned as mulch to the soil. More and more councils run special shredding days to deal with the mountains of old trees. or you could get together with a group of friends, hire a machine for the day and have a new-year garden party. Just imagine the relief of not having to look out of the kitchen window at yet another slowly dying

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siderate male companion, of similar age, for triendshipplasting relationship. Nons/Derby/Leoaster area. 22:4353

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seeks single male, N.S. Devon 23:379

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Altractive, terminine blonde, 37. seeks tall, professional male, for romantic times. Must enjoy

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Well-built lady, 34, one teenage

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conversation, seeks male, for
trendshiptrelationship. A relaxed
attitude to housework and a lik-

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hautre, outdoors, similar age, for friendship, possibly more. 17:4395

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Outgoing and furn female, 32. GSOH, seeks make, 25-40, for furn and good times. S East. 17:4368

NEW HORIZONS

Professional, petite female, 33, 52°. blue-green eyes, seeks metligent, attractive, professional male, for friendship, possibly more Edinburch, 17:4385

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ON THE FIRST

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Romantic, fun-loving, profesional female, 30, GSOH, encoys theatre, keep-lit, interior decorating, lazz music, seeks professional, similar male, under 40, great personality, GSOH, nationality unimportant, for friendship possible romance. London only, 74/205
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country pubs, seeks attractive,
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NS, for friendship/tomance,
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30-something, 510°, Intelligent, sim and athletic, seeks striller, interesting female, 253NS, who enjoys culture, conversation and country walks, to share fun and friendehip. 274373

EAST YORKS MALE.

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London. 224375
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Male. 38, 627, seeks attractive
tenale soul mate, 33-40, N/S,
gemini/aquarius, to share long
country waiks, Handel's
Messah or an Ealing comedy,
with a view to a long-term relatonship. Yorkshire/Flumbers.

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warm temale, any nationality, for romance. London/SE area. 274394 SOUL MATE REQUIRED Tall, sim, easygoing, honest, protessional male, young 52, N/S, enjoys travel, music,

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special lady, for TLC, personality more amportant than age.
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174354

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ATHLETIC MALE

Altractive, articulate male, 27, enjoys life to the full, seeks similar length of the full, seeks similar temale, for fun, triendship and more. London. 13/4370

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VGSOH. 30-50, any culture,
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love of travel, food and mysterles, music, sport, walking, choma, theatre, good art and cats.
23'4355.

Fit, medium-built, equations, male, 23, 57, gorgeous eyes, clubs, restau-

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Any control pasters

about any expect of the following

resemble invitor, plants out

Intaligent, good-looking, withy male, 28, 6', into theatre, diving out, walking, cinema, conversation, traveling out, socialising, seeks similar female, 25-45, no lies, for fun, friendshiphelationship, West Midlands. 124397

NEW HORIZONS

Carton Language Suprague 20-Caring, loving, supportive, pro-fessional male, 32, 5'10", medi-

fessional male, 32, 510°, medium bufid, NS, enloys walding, music, cycling, keep-fit chrema, cooking, seeks professional female, 20-30, 52°+, beauty both inside and out, for friendship, maybe more. NW area, 19436

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alternative esoleric subjects,
cinema, the arts, music, enjoya
questioning accepted notions
of reality, seeks fermain, 24-34,
to give and receive love.
724349

EARTH MAN
Articidative scheethyrous, types

EARTH MAN
Articulate, adventurous type,
34, interests include spiritual
development, ireland, breathing fresh air, organic farming,
seeks bright, independent
famale, any age, for friendship/relationship. Bristol area.
274376

OXFORD MALE....31, 59", sim. professional, graduate, varied interests, seeks male, 30-45, for frendshipirelaborahip. Birtstol area. 274376 SPECIAL LADY SOUGHT Adventurous, tall, sim, Surray male. 39, lovely smile, likas travel, wildlife, diring out, seeks intelligent, articulate lady, for lasting future. 1274364 more than just 9-5, seeks similar male, for Christmas and beyond London. 274388

JUST FRIENDS

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Male, would like to meet other local artists, 203-40s, N/S. to paint, draw and to exchange ideas. £24193
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A shot in the dark for the woodcock



Woodcock of the north: they are driven south by the winter, but no one knows why the birds end

Photograph: Ardea

The numbers of one of our more flamboyant yet mysterious birds are swelled by migrants this season. Duff Hart-Davis writes in praise of the woodcock.

This is the time of year when shooting men hope to come across that elusive and unpredictable rarity - the woodcock. You can go out and find a pheasant or a pigeon any day, but a woodcock is something else - a bird whose magic derives from its very evanescence.

The most fascinating thing about woodcocks is the way they silently come and go; one day there are none in a wood. and the next you may find several. Most country people reckon they are migrants, and associate their arrival in England with the onset of harsh weather in the far north of Europe; it is well established that ice and snow drive the birds southwards in search of warmer climes, and that during their nocturnal journeys some are forced down by exhaustion, short of their ideal destination. This explains why they are sometimes found in apparently uncongenial surroundings, such as the middle of a field of kale. A few old boys still speak of a "fall" of woodcocks, meaning that some have dropped in out of the sky during the night. I treasure the story of the Norfolk squire who, early this century, departed for a winter season at his club in London. leaving his gamekeeper George with instructions to inform him when the wood-

cocks arrived. In due course he received in a huge figure of eight. All the time a letter which read, in its entirety:

The kaks becam

No doubt the squire hastened home for when the woodcocks are in, they add enormously to the excitement of the day. From boyhood in the Chilterns I remember old Harry Brown, the keeper, letting out a tremendous roar of

They jump up with a clap of wings from under a bush, and, considering their rather heavy build, like a jumbo snipe, jink their way through the trees with as-

They are hard to find and difficult to shoot, but they are delicious to eat, tasting like a pheasant that might have been without moving. lurking in a marsh: the slight fishy tang doubtless derives from their habit of feeding on carthworms.

Even if winter does swell the population with migrants, some woodcocks remain in Britain all year round, and their breeding habits are unique in several ways. On late spring evenings a male will launch into the form of display known as roding, during which he patrols his territory with long, circular flights just over the trees.

Back and forth through the dusk he goes, not dodging about as he would in the wood, but flying straight and fast, with heavy, owl-like wing-heats, sometimes in an oblong loop which may be to collect the second and third of her half a mile from end to end, sometimes brood,

he is turning his head from side to side and uttering two quite different calls: one a single, high-pitched squeak, the other a guttural urk, urk.

His mate, meanwhile, is nesting on the ground, often at the foot of a tree. should they risk a transit of the North Sea. If she has chosen a bed of beech leaves as a site, her wonderful camouflage marbling of dark brown, light brown and black - makes her almost impossible to "WOODcock!" every time one was pick out. It is said that during daylight she slowly rotates on the nest so as to keep her head away from the sun and glint that might betray her presence. Cerbut over the tops of

> Rotation on a nest is something I have never witnessed. What I have seen is another peculiar habit often dismissed as a fairy tale: a mother carrying a chick between her thighs. One summer afternoon, as I walked quietly along a woodland ride, a woodcock burst out of the undergrowth a few feet away, and I saw at once that there was something odd about her. In flight she looked abnormally upright and elongated, so heavy that she could barely clear the brambles. Staring, I realised that she had a fluffy baby clamped between her knees. Having plopped it down on a new site some 20 yards off, she made two return trips

Migration to Britain, however, remains the most curious facet of woodcock behaviour. It makes perfect sense that the birds should head south for Portugal, Spain, northern Greece and Turkey, to escape the northern winter, but why when they could travel more safely, and in easy stages, overland? (Experts assume

that if strong south-westerly winds blow

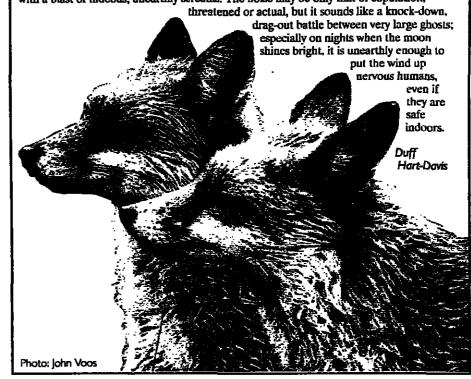
up, thousands must-drown.) A recent, fascinating suggestion is that the birds are still following the migratory routes pioneered by their ancestors prevent her eyes giving off any tell-tale millennia ago, before the North Sea existed, from the time when Britain was tainly woodcocks' eyes are enormous, still part of mainland Europe. Ringing tonishingly swift and frequent changes and set very high on the sides of the bead has shown that latter-day woodcocks re-- so high, in fact, that biologists believe turn to their wintering and breeding the birds can see not only all round them, grounds with astonishing fidelity - so perhaps our latter-day visitors steer by agi old instincts, without realising that a potentially lethal expanse of sea lies ahead of them.

A story is told of the late Sir Charles Ciore - less knowledgeable about country matters than the Norfolk squire - who used to hold grand pheasant shoots at Stype, his estate in Gloucestershire. One day, when he saw that the bag included a woodcock, he boomed at his gamekeeper, "I like them! We'll rear a thousand of them next year."

His enthusiasm was entirely misplaced. The whole point about woodcocks is that they cannot be reared artificially, like pheasants or partridges. They cannot be corralled or decoyed. On the contrary, they go their own mysterious way, and so retain their magic.

NATURE NOTE

Oblivious of Mike Foster and his bill to ban hunting with hounds, foxes have started their annual round of procreation - and a rackety business it is. Every night from now until after Christmas, dog foxes will patrol the woods and fields, announcing their presence with volleys of dry, staccato barks. Some males seem to be two-bark specialists, some three: "roff, roff, roff," they go, repeating the call every few minutes as they trawl through the landscape, often following the scent trail of a female that has come into season. The vixen does not answer from a distance; only when brought to close quarters does she give tongue with a blast of hideous, unearthly screams. The noise may be only that of copulation,



Christmas gifts for the green at heart

What do you give a nature lover for Christmas? Daniel Butler has a host of helpful suggestions.

The chances are that your family or friends already possess the best field guide or thermal gloves, while binoculars and walking-boots are beyond many budgets. Nil desperandam: there is a host of relatively inexpensive possibilities that enable you to make a gift to benefit more than the receiver.

Take adoption schemes, for animals. Prices generally start to join a seal watch. at £20 for a gerbil, kookaburra or black widow spider, runelephant. Contact Animal Adoptions, London Zoo, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY (0171-449 6262).

The Penzance Bat Hospital runs an adoption service for where they control coarse which you (or the recipient of grasses and scrub. Unfortuyour gift) can sponsor named, nately they can never be eco-- est's barn lowls. These have

long-term residents. A sum of £15 will feed Earwig, a brown long-cared bat, for a year, while the donor's nominee gets an adoption certificate, a welcome pack and two "progress reports". Sponsors are also welcome to visit their charges and in some cases —to handle them. Write to Cornwall WT. Freepost PY1774. Five Acres. Allet, Truro, Cornwall TR4 9DJ (01736 365687).

For those with an aversion to hats, the trust runs scal sponsorship schemes. For £15 you can adopt a specific pup (£10 for juniors) which gives you a certificate, seal pack and sixexample. London Zoo runs monthly updates; £30 provides such schemes for endangered a colour print and an invitation

Normally environmentalists blanch at the idea of sheep ning up to £6,000 for an subsidies, but Suffolk Wildlife Trust has an entirely laudable scheme to help maintain its rare Speckle-faced Beulah flock. These are vital for the health of Sandlings Heath,

nomic because they are al- been particularly hard hit by lowed to graze only sparsely and must over-winter indoors. so the trust offers packages to cover the feed, shearing and veterinary bills. These range from £15 for a lamb to £50 for a ram. For more information contact Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Brooke House, The Green, Ashbocking, Suffolk IP6 9JY (01473 890089). You can also provide help

out in the wild. Dormice, for

example, are threatened al-

most everywhere, and specially constructed nest boxes can help halt the decline. For £7.50 Cheshire Wildlife Trust (Grebe House, Reaseheath, Nantwich CW5 6DG) will send you a certificate for your own numbered dormouse box, an information pack and undates on occupancy. The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (18 High St, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 IAT -01380 725670) does the same

for £10. your passion, the trust runs a itional skills while improving the scheme to help Braydon For- environment.

the loss of traditional farm outbuildings to residential conversions, and the scheme provides artificial nests on suitable farms. Unfortunately each box costs £30 to build and erect, and the project officer, David Picket, says the scheme has run out of money and would welcome donations to build further sites.

There are more organic ways of providing food and shelter, however. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers runs a tree-sponsorship scheme. For a donation of £17, volunteers will plant the donor's choice of native tree, tagged with their name, and from then on each year they will receive a commemorative card and be invited to a tree-planting event.

But this may be too passive for some. Those wanting to get their hands dirty may benefit from a BTCV break. These Alternatively, if birds are offer the chance to learn trad-

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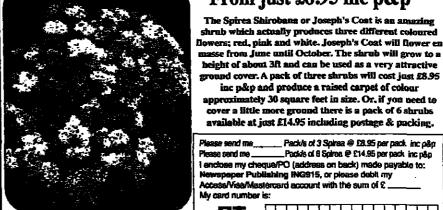
working holidays on offer throughout the year, spread across the whole of mainland Britain, ranging from hedgelaying to otter-bolt construction. The cost of such breaks is minimal - volunteers are charged only for food and accommodation, which is often very basic - and prices start at £22 for a weekend and £40 for a week. Information on both tree-planting and breaks is available from the BTCV at 36 St Mary's Street, Wallingford,

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839766). Finally, don't forget that gardens and windowsills are miniature environments in their own right. Supplying food and shelter can provide help to dozens of creatures, not to mention increasing human pleasure. The RSPB, for example, has an extensive mailorder range that includes bird tables (starting at £20), nest boxes (£10.50) and feeders (£8). Contact the RSPB shop at The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL (01767

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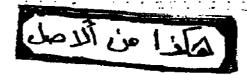
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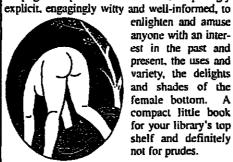
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Curaun att Bivan Seis Certainly!

> jump off there." The old boy from Yorkshire had a point. By normal standards, hurling yourself from the top of a crane to bounce around on an elastic band wouldn't be an obvious thing to choose to do, re-

the £50, another body came winging down, exclaiming: "Better than sex!" before pinging skywards on the rebound. The old cynic still wasn't convinced: "He can't be doing it right.'

It may be fun, as thousands of jumpers have been proving for years, but it doesn't take a Casanova to know that the sex analogy simply can't be correct. OK, bungeejumping is a brief thrill, involving a mighty surge of adrenaline and ecstatic shouting, but you do it upside down, at speeds of up to 100mph. Call me old-fashioned, but it's not my idea of a roll in the hay.

From the moment you think about jumping, the idea haunts you. If you dither, it could be weeks of torture, the thought forcing its way in whenever there's a gap in the day, and time to frighten yourself. The longer you leave it, the worse it gets.

Dwelling on the origins of bungee doesn't help: a woman on the Vanuatu Islands in the Pacific fled from her maraudshe was trapped, she tied a vine to her ankle and jumped. Meanwhile her husband didn't tie a vine to his ankle, and jumped

problems? no heart complaints?" routine is for real, but in the true spirit of the circus, every last ounce of atmosphere and buzz is wrung from the procedure, just in case you might start to feel, despite your nerves, that your money could have been better spent.

But that's cold feet for you. While waiting for the long crane ride, any number of plausible arguments go from your spinning head to your churning stomach, not least that there's no sane, sensible reason for going ahead. The reality, once you've been eighed, joined the queue, stepped into the cage - is that you've come all this way, paid your money - and lots of people are watching. You've got to jump. And you do. Don't look down, don't

look anywhere; don't think, don't breathe. Just 5-4-3-2-1-bungee. The first, fastest, highest drop is almost instantly over, moments of hollow free fall leaving you a few feet from the ground, pumping with adrepaline and gasping at the recognition that you're still alive. Now the real terror begins, as the elastic pulls you inexorably up. suspended in time and space, to hang once more, high in the sky, before plunging back towards earth. Finally your diminishing bounces subside to leave you helplessly dangling on the end of the rope and you're lowered down to exchange endless grins and even transatlantic whoops with other jumpers - a mixture of relief and something more powerful that could have you feel-

It's a fantastic sensation. Many people immediately want to jump again, and tied to their some come back to become serial jumpers, ankles, as a trying every trick imaginable, from acrorite of pas- batic stunts to blindfold, fear-enhancing techniques. But for the

> there. Without any skills to learn or progress to make, why do it again? It's the ultimate fairground ride, though maybe safer, but wouldn't driving the roller-coaster be even better than taking a scary The minimal danger

(when jumping with a reputable operator) and zero qualifications required are both the best and the worst of bungee. You don't cord, fly the hang-glider, dive deeper or in any way influence the outcome: a sack of potatoes can bungee-jump. If one

thing is certain about bungee, whatever any-

one tries to tell you, coming to a sticky end

Taking the plunge The British Elastic Rope Sports Assoc-

iation, Bersa (01865-311-179), promotes bungee-jumping in the UK and ensures affiliated clubs operate within their strict code have to pull the parachute rip of practice; call for details of your nearest Bersa affiliated jump site. The UK Bungee Club (0171-720 9496)

has mobile rigs that operate all over the country, as well as the permanent site at Chelsea Bridge. Since 1992 more than 100,000 people have jumped with them. The

first jump costs £50, subsequent jumps £35. Approximately one-third of their customers jump for charity, one third as a challenge (in some cases having been given "gift" jumps - it's more exciting than a book token). They categorise the final third as adrenatine junkies. Summer is the main season, though weekend jumps continue

throughout the year. Most UK jumping is from cranes, though the first jump was made from Clifton Suspension Bridge, in 1979, Some aficionados claim that jumping in impres- Better than sex? After a jump there's sive gorges such as New Zealand's Skipper's a mixture of relief and something Canyon adds something to the experience, more powerful that could have you but a crane probably gives the most extreme feeling good for days sensation of exposure and height. Jumps have also been made from balloons, heli- Photograph: Peter Andrews/Reuters copters, cable cars and dams.

Safety records of reputable companies are impressive. The only special requirements for the jumper, beyond basic good health, are to empty pockets of loose can also try catapulting - reverse bungee change and to wear clothing that's tight - which is exactly as it sounds.

enough not to come straight off over your head. People looking for an additional thrill





How to lose your inhibitions - dramatically

It was a backwards jump into the unknown, but for Jonathan Stebbings a weekend 'mytho-drama' event was both rewarding and liberating.

the Wild Dance weekend I felt way out of my depth. I found myself shifting from one foot to the other as the rest of the group (an intriguing mix of ages, genders and lifestyles) thrashed, rolled, cried and cursed to a tribal rhythm thumped out on a massive drom. If I shut my eyes the beat did become a hypnotic but I wasn't going to

express" myself for anybody. This was a birthday present. I had asked for an experience I would not normally choose. and my wife had presented me with Wild Dance Events' brochure and suggested "Vision & Regeneration in Winter's Tale". at the Globe Theatre. This was described as "a weekend of mytho-drama". What attracted me was the prospect of hamming it up with Mark Rylance and Richard Offvier, two leading lights behind the rebirth of Shakespeare's Globe.

As the course developed it barely able to think about after

became clear that mytho-drama his death. I found myself adis a way of using a dramatic text to explore one's own emotional condition. Each person, obviously, gets something different out of the experience. Our dramatic text, The Winter's Tale, is an archetype of emotional stagnation and regeneration Within half an hour of starting for which participants were asked to bring two suitable symbols. So from the depths of Oxfordshire I headed for Loudon with some horse manure (my symbol of stagnation) and an egg from my daughter's chicken (regeneration).

The first day concentrated on the tragic first half of The Winter's Tale, and it finished with a requiem chant and the option to present an offering to an altar for something we had lost. I still felt silly swaying and singing in a central African dialect. But after 10 minutes - you need patience before the spirit turns up - I began to feel a strong urge to present my egg to my long-dead father. The more my inhibitions bridled at the prospect, the more I felt compelled to walk alone, in front of all those people, and make a private, personal gesture to someone I had been unable to communicate with in life and

dressing an issue I had buried for 10 years, clearly and sincerely. It was like an unblocked sink draining away at last.

The next morning began with Richard Olivier leading us on a journey through the elements and seasons as a mythic assessment of our lives at different stages. Again, I felt that to view my condition as static or dynamic, male or female, was pop psycho-babble. Apparently I was stuck in the

autumn of a static male; in other words, I was a crusty old bugger like King Lear, who needed a good shove towards the next stage - "dynamic female". I had to "become" Perdita. heroine of The Winter's Tale. As a classically repressed Englishman I like to camp it up with the best of them; but turning into a 16-year-old shepherdess who is really a lost princess wasn't so compelling. However, soon we were moving to the rhythm of the drum and I found myself drawn to Perdita's wintry domain. Some lilies on the altar caught my attention and as I sniffed them in my abandonment, red pollen stained my nose. Before long I had daubed my face and arms and began behaving in the way one can't remember at a good party.

I spent the rest of the day looking like a savage. I braved lunch at a Southwark pub, and then threw myself into the next ritual. This culminated in being led blindfold by Richard Olivier along passages and up stairs. I was taken through a door and felt the wind on my face. I realised we were on the roof, seven floors up. I was led up ladders and round corners - 1 heard traffic far below and trains on the London Bridge line. Then I was told to fall backwards.

I expected to be caught almost immediately, but I continued falling into space for what seemed a delicious and liberated age. Then hands reached out to stop me. I suppose the essence of it was to be willing to take a risk - literally a leap in the dark.

Wild Dance, a non-profit making organisation, began seven years ago after Richard Olivier organised an event for the American poet Robert Bly. author of Iron John and doven of the mythic movement. A veteran of the best and victim of the worst aspects of the men's movement, Olivier developed Wild Dance Events from his work with Blv.

It is now Britain's leading ex-

ponent of workshops for men and women and runs many events - from evenings to weeklong retreats, for men, women, mixed groups, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters. The media include poetry, story-telling, music, drumming and dance, Every event is unique, adapting to the needs and personalities of those taking part. Many of the rituals are chosen or even invented as the event happens.

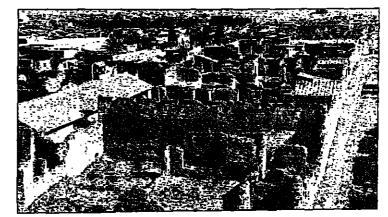
There is no connection with any religion or New Age practice, so it is a comfortable place for rational sceptics and fundamentalists. You don't need experience or talent to take part, and at no point are you expected to reveal anything about yourself. Great emphasis is placed on physical and emotional safety; the leaders remain detached from proceedings to ensure everyone's well-being.

Next year their events will include a weekend for fathers and sons, two rites of passage weeks and mytho-drama weekends with Richard Olivier and Mark Rylance, based on the Globe's productions.

For next year's programme, call Wild Dance Events (0171-813) 4260), or write to BCM, Box 8059, London WCIN 3XX.



INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



THE SHADOW OF VESUVIUS

Geoff Hill visits Naples and Pompeii

Plus: all you'll ever need to know about skiing in France

YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HOLIDAYS

The Empire hikes back

It was built to keep the Picts at bay, but now it has become a promenade for walkers ...

Hamish Scott patrols Hadrian's Wall.

Old frontiers are thought-provoking. Rivers, hills and hedgerows that once defined a nation's territorial identity revert to being harmless features of a larger landscape once the winds of history have changed. Flint arrowheads and iron swords, bullet-cases and rejected visa applications may lie buried in the soil, but the line defended with such passion has vanished, like some long-dead tom-cat's urine trail, and can scarcely be detected on the ground.

In Northumberland, however, one of the most significant of frontiers in the history of Europe still exists. In AD 122 the Emperor Hadrian ordered the construction of a wall that would define the farthest limit of the Roman empire. Perhaps even at the time there were questions raised about some details of the project, such as the need for gateways every mile, even on the steepest cliff, but orders were obeyed and within eight years the wall had been completed. Some 20ft in height, 10ft wide and 76 miles long, with garrisons sufficient for 10,000 men, it stretched in an unbroken line! from the North Sea to the Solway Firth and was so superbly built that long stretches still remain virtually intact, a promenade for hikers following the footsteps of legionary

patrols. We began our own patrol at Steel Rig, from a tree-lined car park in a bleak expanse of Border moorland. Taking a footpath to the south, we immediately reached the wall, reduced by plunder to chestheight but still a massive barrier of wellcut stone aligned with military precision along the jagged edge of an escarpment. Our route lay to the left, eastwards through the grazing lands of the Votadini,

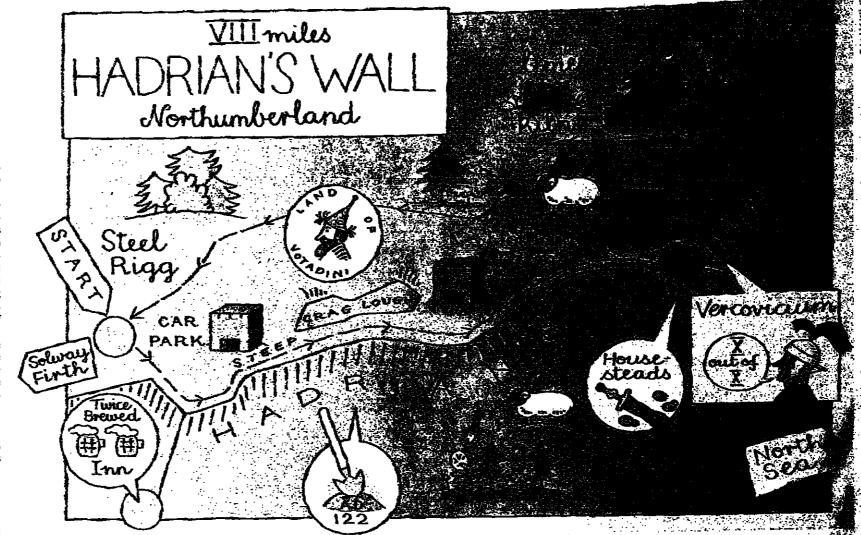
a Celtic tribe whose views, presumably, were not consulted in the planning stages of the project.

Roman civil engineers took a virile attitude to contours. Following the whinstone ridge, the path beside the wall dips and climbs along the basalt crags with no concessions to civilian knees. Legionaries could march for 20 miles loaded down like mules, and then, before they had their dinner, build themselves a camp that would last 2,000 years. Few modern visitors would care to haul a single block of stone up any of the steeper slopes.

Coming to our first milecastle, we rested to admire the view. To the north the ground dropped steeply from below the gateway, with rough, uncultivated pasture stretching to the conifer-clad hills of Kiel-

The southern view, towards the Pennine moors, was equally as desolate, and imagination was required to visualise the roads and farmsteads, garrisons and settlements that formed the Roman landscape. Two tattooed walkers nodded to us in a friendly manner, but there was no sign of hostile Picts, so we continued our patrol above a reed-fringed loch, through a pretty cliff-side wood of rowan, hazel and Scots pine and on past a lonely farmhouse in the lee of Hotbanks Crags. Despite the setting there were no signs advertising Teas or Bed & Breakfast. Northumbrian hill-farmers, even on well-trodden routes, seldom fraternise with hikers.

The route grew busier approaching Housesteads, the wall's most popular attraction. The excavated fort is a ghost town of low, ruined walls that housed a garrison from far-flung corners of the empire. There's an impressive villa that was home to the commanding officer, barracks, stores and even a small hospital, but the most poignant symbol of the Pax Romana is a corridor that once contained a row of cosy seats built over a drain. If any soldier



ever questioned the benefits of Roman life. his doubts were soon settled in the known world's last latrine.

Having dutifully paid our entrance fee at the museum, we carried on for half a mile to a stile across the wall at King's Wicket. The linear nature of the frontier does not provide many opportunities for decent circuits, but from here a pleasant footpath loops back to Steel Rig.

It's a lonely route across rough grass-land grazed by sheep and shaggy Galloway beef cattle, leading through a small plantation and on past an old lime kiln. Agricultural improvers in the 18th cent-

ury converted upland farmers to the beer was too weak for the redcoats, and benefits of quicklime with a zeal not seen since the Romans introduced the Votadini to hot baths. High above us to the left, the wall appeared as a spine of stone surmounting the cliff edge. Distant voices could be heard, faint enough to sound like

Wearily returning to the car park, having travelled for eight miles and 18 centuries, we headed off for lunch. The Twice Brewed Inn was built for soldiers working on the military road that General Wade constructed to protect the British empire from Jacobite barbarians. Apparently the

required a second brew. Our Marstons was, however, strong enough and very welcome, while Sunday lunch, though scarcely rivalling the roast swan stuffed with peacock of Luculius, was substantial, and cost just £3.95.

Steel Rig is signposted off B6318 Chollerford-Greenhead road, opposite the information centre near the Twice Brewed Inn. From the National Trust car park at Steel Rig, follow the footpath sign to wall. ● Turn left along line of wall and follow way-marked right-of-way to Housingleads. • From Housesteads, continue along the southern (right-hand) side of the wall for half a mile, to King's Wicket.

 Cross the stile and bear left along the footpath over grassland to a small plantation. Follow the path through it and across Pennine Way to a lime kiln.

• From the kiln, continue straight ahead along a faint path for half a mile, then bear left along a track towards Hotbanks Farm. ■ Turn right over a stile before a farm gate and follow a way-marked path across fields to return to the car park. Map: Ordnance Survey Landranger 86

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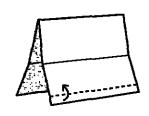
GAMES

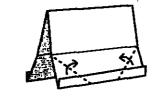
BAWN O'BEIRNE RANELAGH DON'T JUNK IT - USE IT

More origami this week - a credit-card case designed by Humiata Huzita, who is a physics professor in Padua.

paper. Fold it in half, bringing the two shorter edges together. Then fold both free edges to the crease in the middle and unfold

Now fold up a small hem on

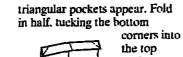


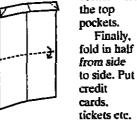


each side as shown below. Fold the corners in to the crease in the middle. Do this on both

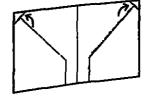
Next, fold up again along the crease. Leaving these folds in place, unfold the top fold (the first one you made) and turn the paper over, then rotate to leave a short edge at the top.

Fold the top down to make a hem. You will notice two





into the four pockets.



BOOK OF THE WEEK WILLIAM HARTSTON

Did you know that if you measure the circumference of your head in inches and divide by π, then round to the nearest eighth, you get your hat size? Did you know that the millionth digit of # is 1, or that the 360th digit and the two on each side of it read "360"?

I learned these marvellous pieces of information from a new book. The Joy of # (Allen Lane, £12.99), by David Blatner. The major part of this book is a history of man's quest to achieve ever more accurate approximations to the ration between the circumference and diameter of a circle. It is the story of geniuses and obsessives. from such great mathematicians as Newton and Euler, both of whom made significant contributions to the theory of π (indeed it was Euler who was the first to call it by the name of the Greek letter for p), to modern-day π-hunters such as the Chudnovsky brothers, who calculated 8 billion digits of π in 1996, and Kanada and Takahashi who extended the record to over 51 billion digits this year.

The book is beautifully designed to include the first million digits. The perfect Christmas gift for anyone fascinated by mathematics.

PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Rowley Leigh, 47, chef at Kensington Place restaurant, London W8

Nine years ago, before I started playing. I thought golf was desperately suburban - a game for horing people in car-coats - but now I absolutely enjoy it. I know the people who play are awful, but it doesn't demerit what used to be quite a civilized game.

It's a nice walk, and you can play entirely against yourself. The whole point is to have an inner calm - very Zen, because you can't really control how you feel or how you're going to play. Anyone who plays competitively against other people is completely mad.

Proper golf is a good country game, and it doesn't matter how had you are - at least once in a round you're going to hit a shot as good as Nick Faldo or Seve Ballesteros, And when you do it's sheer exhibaration.

My partners have a sort of team called Hack in the Bush Club, and we all cheat like hell by giving each other free shots. If you muff your drive you get another go. We do

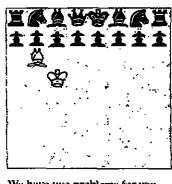
stretch the rules a little bit, as I quite often miss the ball completely.

I like to play on Sunday afternoons in Deauville, where it is incredibly difficult to get on the course. There's always a huge crowd milling round, waiting for their teetime, which is the allotted six-minute span to start off. When I eventually got on last time. my first ball hit a barn door. There was a huge clattering bang, and anybody who hadn't actually been watching knew what had happened. But I'm so bad that I'm impervious to humiliation.

I play on Wimbledon Common, and whenever I'm about to make a shot, I'll always hear someone in the background screaming "Come here. Rowley!" which is incredibly off-putting. Ever since Eastenders, everybody's called their dog Rowley.

From Wimbledon Common, take the district line to High Street Kensington, and then it's a pleasant walk up Kensington Church Street to the delights of the Kensington Place Restaurant and bar.

CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON



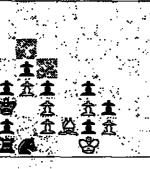
We have two problems for you today, with two things in common. The first is that they are both help-mates - which means that both sides co-operate to reach a position in which Black is mated - and the second is something you will not recognise until you have solved them both.

The first position is a helomate in four: Black moves first and both sides conspire to reach a position in which White's fourth move gives mate. This was first shown to me on a long train journey, and it kept me happily infuriated for about threequarters of an hour. I spent ages trying to checkmate the black king on e7, but first there's the problem that 1.c6 puts White in check, and then there's the other problem of leaving e8 vacant if the king moves to e7.

My next idea was to get the king to d8 and queen to c8, while White's moves are Bxa7, Bxb8. Kh6 and Bc7. But how do the black king and queen swap places in four moves?

The answer (obvious once you've seen it) is very elegant: 1.c6 Bxa7 2.Qb6+! Kxb6 3.Kd8

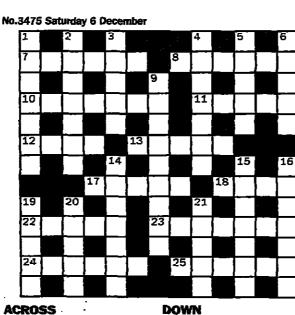
Kc5 4.Kc7 Bb6 mate. The way White's pieces each dance forward one step on the diagonal, then skip back to occupy their original squares, gives considerable charm to the composition.



I do not know who composed the first position, but this one is by Leon Loewenton and is a help-mate in five. If it were White's move, he could play Bc1 and it would be over, but Black has no waiting move that lets him do it. What we need to do is somehow spend four moves coming back to much the same position, but with White to

mòve. Here's how it is done: 1.Kb2 Bc1+ 2.Kxc3 Bb2+ 3.Kxb4 Be3+ 4.Ka3 Bd2 and now 5.b4! Bel mate! In the first position it was White's king and bishop that retraced their steps, in this case both the black king and white bishop danced round in complete circles. The backtracking is what makes these things so difficult to solve.

CONCISE CROSSWORD



- Gatekeeper (6) Roar (6) Bounce back (7)
- 11 Group of singers (5) Scented powder (4)
- 13 Yellowish pigment (5) 17 Fixative used by glaziers (5) 18 Linear measure (4)
- Firework (5) Best (7)

- Function (7) Run with ball at one's feet (7) Happen again (5)
- Weapon (5)
- 24 Convent superior (6) 25 Makes amends (6)

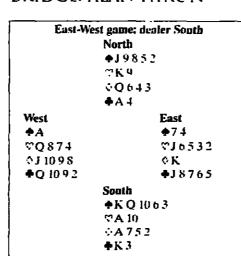
Planet (7) Deluge (5)

- Schooling (9) Nonsense (7) 15 Flower (7)
- 16 Pharmacist (7) 19 Written composition (5) 20 Guardsman's hat (5) 21 Declare (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Hobble, 4 Legato (Obbligato), 7 Emollient, 9 Help. 10 Gull. 11 Egged, 13 Phoney, 14 Runner, 15 Sordid, 17 Pedlar, 19 Eaves, 20 Trot, 22 Gear, 25 Magic wand, 24 Facing, 25 Teichy, DOWN: 1 Hush up. 2 Bump, 3 Eulogy, 4 Loiter, 5 Gong, 6 Oxler, 7 Ellow from, 8 Tunnelled, 11 Egrie, 12 Dupes, 15 Set off, 16 Daring, 17 Pecwit, 18 Rarely, 21 Taxi, 22 Gnat,

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON



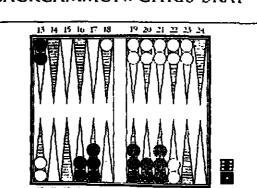
This deal was originally set as a problem, but it is not just a question of spotting an answer - I want you to find the two solutions. Perhaps the bidding went: one spade - four

spades, and west leads the jack of diamonds. Dummy plays low and the king appears. Over to

The obvious approach is to win and play trumps, but now west takes his ace and continues with the ten of diamonds. East rulfs the queen if it is played, and there are still two diamond tricks to be lost. The "official" solution was to let the king of diamonds hold. Can you see the difference? When west gets in with the ace of spades, he can give his partner a diamond ruff, but it is only a losing diamond - south still has the ace and queen of diamonds intact to make

later. And the alternative? Well, south can still recover even if he wins the first trick with his ace. He eliminates both hearts and clubs first before leading a trump. West wins, and the queen of diamonds is ruffed away by east. However, this leaves east on lead with no safe exit and either a heart or a club from him gives declarer a ruff and discard and his tenth trick.

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



As I strolled between the boards of the weekly tournament at the Double Fives (DF) Club I spotted this position where The Doven - George Sulimirski -

had a 61 to play with the score at double match point. Trivial, I thought. He must make the full prime by playing 13/7, 8/7. Even if his opponent hits with a 1 he is likely to stay on the bar while his opponent's home board will self-destruct. Even if Black is unfortunate enough to enter immediately after being hit he will still have a full prime versus a 5-prime. If in the original position The Doven plays something like 8/2, 6/5 then he runs a number of risks; losing the race to a welltimed set of double fours; baving a man on his midpoint hit as he brings home his men; and having difficulty clearing his outside points. By making his barpoint now he avoids all these problems.

Meanwhile The Doyen continued to ponder. We don't keep records at the DF, but it is reckoned that he last left a voluntary shot at the time of the Suez crisis. True to form, after another minute's thought he duly played 8/2, 6/5. Nothing exciting happened for the rest

of the game and he easily won both game and match. Intrigued, I analysed the position using Jellyfish. The results surprised me. The two plays lead to an identical winning percentage (75 per cent). The advantages of making the bar-point are offset by the times that White hits the blot and goes on to win. The lesson is that two plans can be equally valid. Don't assume, as I did, that the obvious move is necessarily the best.

Incidentally, if Black had already doubled, making the bar is best as this leads to winning more gammons -But this factor is irrelevant at double match point.





حكنا من الاعل

15/GARDENING









Pride of Cambridge: drawings from the Fitzwilliam Museum (now part of a collection published by Cambridge University Press). Far left, French School, 17th century, Bluebell and dragonfly; top row from left, Pieter Withoos' foxglove and ornamental flowers by Thomas Robins the Elder: bottom row from left, Daturz rosei by Augusta Innes Withers and Michiel van Huysen's Flower in a Chinese Yase

The gardener's handsome prints

Rare plant drawings; culent kitchen vegetables; gorgeous antique plants: Anna Pavord offers a Christmas books selection.

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BACK TO

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The worst Christmas present I ever had was a pair of insoles for my wellington boots: practical, without a doubt, necessary even, given the fact that blood regularly forgets to visit the distant lands below my knees. But how dreary that present was. And, unfortunately, the person who gave it to me was around when I was unwrapping it. "Gosh," I said, forcing my mouth into a more than usually hideous rictus of a smile. "How very useful." The donor looked pleased.

But what he didn't realise was that usefulness comes very low on my list of priorities. Presents are treats. They don't come round very often and I like them to be deeply unuseful things that I would never think of buying for myself. That's why books make such good presents. The element of treat is there, but there is the added relish of matching book

to person. Top of my Christmas present list (if I didn't already bave it) would he the beautifully printed collection of Flower Drawings (Cambridge University Press, £11.95) put together and annotated by David Scrase. keeper of paintings, drawings and prints at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The

drawings. More than 100 oil paintings (including work by Brueghel and Jan van Huysum) and 900-plus drawings were bequeathed to them in 1973 after the death of Major Henry Broughton, of Anglesey Abbey in Cambridgeshire, who had spent a lifetime amassing these

Many of the drawings are bound in albums and are rarely on view at the museum. So this book gives us a chance to see images that are not only luscious, but also unfamiliar. It's touching, too, in days when the garden presents nothing more riveting to the eye than banks of soggy leaves, to gaze at an image as ravishing as Pieter Withoos's foxglove, painted in the second half of the 17th

Although the foxglove must then have been as familiar a wild flower as it is today, you rarely see them in flower studies. Perhaps the reason this was carefully recorded on veilum, the watercolour highlighted with touches of gum arabic, is that it is not an ordinary, purple kind of foxglove, but a soft, enchanting pink. It is exactly the colour of the strain we now know as 'Apricot'. Was this perhaps the first time a forglove of such a colour had been seen? Was this why Withoos painted it with such care that 300 years on, you can still feel the velvety softness of the spotted gloves climbing up the

Like all the best experts, He never writes about any-

introduction to the book sets in place the great names of flower painting in Europe, such as Ehret and Redoute, but the treats come from his intimate knowledge of lesser-known painters such as the Dietzsch sisters, who worked in Nuremberg at the end of the 18th century. Nuremberg and London were the two most important centres of botanical art at that time, German artists benefiting particularly from the patronage of the rich physician, Christoph Jakob Trew, Barbara Dietzsch's

against a dark background, is a triumph. The book is arranged chronologically, starting with images from medieval manuscripts and a Dutch Book of Hours, where pimpernels and heartsease are scattered in the margins of the manuscript. It finishes with the imposing flowers of Magnolia campbellii, grown at Kew and painted by the Australian artist Margaret Stones in 1989. I was glad to see that Nicolas Robert (1614-1681), whose fabulous watercolours on vellum I first saw at the Fitzwilliam Museum. is well represented in this collec-

pale iris, glowing luminously

tulips every day. Feeding the soul is the great luxury of being alive, but you need to look after the stomach. too. For that, I'd choose Christopher Lloyd's Gardener Cook (Frances Lincoln, £20).

tion. Now I can look at his ou-

trageous red-and-white-striped

ing with deceptive lightness. His hand experience, and is as un-flower." My copy is already compromising about excellence in the kitchen as he is in his garden at Great Dixter, Sussex. He does his own cooking, in case there's any one out there about to say, "Oh, well it's all very well

> That means the recipes can be borrowed by anyone who has an equal love of good, fresh food, but also has 100 other things to do in a day as well as cook. I like them, too, because Mr Lloyd, having flourished all his life on lashings of cream and butter, sees no reason, in his seventies, to give them up. We all have to die, and, like him, I am happier to die from a surfeit of fresh Jersey cream than (which is more likely) in a car crash on the M3. So plenty of double cream in the leek tart (p130), double helpings of double cream with marinated figs (p47), and liberal quantities

> of the stuff in duck stewed with green peas (p152). The text, accompanied by Howard Sooley's succulent photographs, covers the growing of fruit and vegetables as well as their treatment in the kitchen. Again, you know you are in the presence of a man who has done all he is writing about. On parsnips: "Sow in quiet weather (otherwise the winged seeds take off)." On quince: "Pick the mature, fresh fruit as late as you dare, but watch out for the depredations of brown rot fungal patches." On fennel: "Late-maturing

crops have been among my

most successful, as there is less

spattered with mud and melted butter. That is a potent sign of

I first came across The Essential Earthman through an American friend, who sent me a copy from the States. It's a collection of pieces by the late Henry Mitchell, who for more than 20 years was gardening correspondent of the Washington Post. Now the book has been reprinted by Bloomsbury (£12.99) as one of the latest in their admirable series of gardening classics.

Like Mr Lloyd. Mr Mitchell has decided views and a trenchant way of putting them over. "Marigolds gain enormously in impact when used as sparingly as ultimatums." be writes. And "compared to gardeners. I think it is generally agreed that others understand very little about anything of consequence. The "generally agreed" is typical. It's a phrase he often uses to preface some outrageous piece of spe-

cial pleading. Collections such as this. which you can drop in and out of, make ideal bedtime books. Mr Mitchell restores sense where there has been much gardening silliness. A huge fuss, for instance, has been made over the last couple of years about plants that are potentially harmful. The outcome will be that soon we shall be banned from growing them. Here is Mitchell on colchicums: "Some people get upset by poisonous plants, yet those of us who are not forever gnawing on flowers need not be

and power mowers are ordinary hazards, but begin to fidget if there is a colchicum somewhere. as if it might attack or poison one

when dozing." Hurray! David Stuart's interest is in the background and history of the plants we use in our gardens and his most recent book. Gardening with Antique Plants, has been gorgeously produced by Conran Octopus, £25. Pinks, poppies, peonies, marigolds,

ple accept that war, automobiles plants are here. Having previously run his own nursery. Dr Stuart is as good on the practical aspects of growing these plants as he is on their history.

The history of gardens and plants is still the most undervalued aspect of our past. Catch up with Mavis Batev's Regency Gardens (Shire Publications, £5.99), which is at the same time scholarly and concise. Then drool over Vivien Russell's pictures, in Edith Wharton's

Fitzwilliam has an astonishing David Scrase wears his learn- thing of which he has not first- urge for the plants to run up to deterred. It is startling that peo- musk roses - all the must-have Italian Gurdens (Frances Lincoln, £25).

> Finally, persuade someone to give you a copy of The Good Gardens Guide 1998, edited by Peter King (Ebury Press. £14.99). It's an invaluable reference to a thousand gardens. most of them in Britain, with a scatter for Channel-hoppers in France, Belgium and The Netherlands. With this in hand. in the dog days after Christmas, you can plan the gallivanting to

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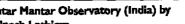
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Pheasant by Brian Harris







Frosted Rose by Brian Harris

Jantar Mantar Observatory (India) by Kalpesh Lathigra Independent/Independent on Sunday Photograph Application Form Please send me: Jantar Mantar Observatory Pheasant 🔲 Frosted Rose 🗔 I enclose my cheque, made payable to The Independent. Tel. no. Please complete in block capitals and send to: Readers Photographs, The Independent, I Canada Square, London E14 5DL

CUTTINGS

Gillian Simmill, of Dorrington, near Shrewsbury in Shropshire, wrote asking for advice about using polythene under gravel areas, to suppress weed growth: "I intend to have gravel walks beside flower borders, across the front of my cottage, and also a gravelled area under a winter cherry, through which I hope to grow small spring bulbs. Obviously, I won't lay polythene where the bulbs are to grow. The paths will not be heavily used, as there will be paving on the other sides of the borders. I want to use gravel, partly to keep costs down and also to

vary the textures of the hard surfaces." By the time the biatus caused by my recent three-week boliday was over, Mrs Simmill had answered her own question, laying plastic sheeting called Nortene under the gravel of her paths. It's best laid on top of sand, to give a smooth hed for il to sit on. Mrs Simmill used 20/10mm gravel. heavier than the pea gravel that we used recently on our sitting-out area. This is a sensible grade for paths, where gravel may kick up. Nortene, says

Mrs Simmill, is not easy to find, but Agralan sell a black material called Permalay, which can be used in a similar way. A pack of Permalay 1.0m wide and 6m long costs £9.95. An economy roll, the same width but 50m long, costs £62.95. For details call 01285 860015.

Whichford Pottery is offering a minimum discount of 10 per cent off all its traditional handthrown clay garden pots at a series of pre-Christmas sales. Some pots are half price. Bargains (as well as tea, coffee, home-made soup and cake) are on offer today and tomorrow (9am-5pm) at Whichford Pottery, Whichford, near Shipston-on- Stour, Warwickshire (01608 684416) and at The Hop Shop, Castle Farm. Shoreham. Kent, which is open from 10am-5pm.

The River Parrett Trail Project in Somersel arose from an unusual partnership between farmers, environmentalists, river agencies and

local craftsmen, with the aim of interpreting and exploiting (in the best sense of the word) the strange and particular landscape of the Somerset Levels. Over the winter and spring, a series of 10 workshops has been set up in this heart of Somerset's willow-growing area. This weekend, Clare Wilks demonstrates how to make live willow seats for the garden. The workshop will be repeated over the weekend of 24-25 January (closing date for applications, 19 December). On 21-22 March, the sculptor Serena de la Hey will show how to create willow sculptures (closing date for applications, 20 February). The workshops cost from £125 to 155 per person. The package includes a full day's tuition, all materials, coffee, sandwiches, dinner in a local pub. B&B at a local pub or farm and a day's exploration of the watery Somerset Levels. For more information, send a stamped, addressed envelope to Ros Marchant, Red Cottage, Stowell, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 4PD (01963 37(H13).

SANDOWN

HYPERION 12.50 Buckhouse Boy 2.30 Klairon Davis 3.05 Potter's Gale 1.25 Friendship 1.55 Direct Route 3.40 Diego

GOING: Chase course - Good (Good to Soft in places); Hurdle course - Good to Soft

(Good in places).

Right-hand course; seven testing tences along back straight.

Course is on A307, 4m S of Kingston, Esher station (service from London, Waterloo) adjoins course. ADMOSSION: Club £16, Jumor Club (17 - 21yrs) £14; Grandstand & Paddock £11; Park enclosure £4, CAR PARIC £2 in members (More Larre), remainder free.

LEADING TRAINERS: D Nicholson 22-75 (293%), J Gifford 17-27 (34%), J Old 10-38 (283%), N Henderson 8-79 (101%), O Sherwood 7-39 (179%), M Pipe 7-44 (56%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: R Diamwoody 22-81 (272%), A Maguira 19-77 (247%), A P McCoy 11-59 (88%), G Bradley 9-76 (125%), M A Ritzgerate 9-92 (87%), D Bridgwater 6-31 (194%).

PAYOURITES: (20-314 (382%)).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

12.50 EWELL CHASE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3m 110yds Penalty Value £6,840

S6-F5 POODBROKER STAR (8) (C) (D) (Food Brokers Ltd.) J Gifford 7 ft 10 _______ P Hide S5-FU ARROWOLF (14) (CD) (BF) (Lady Caralle Dempster) C Brocks 6 ft 7 ______ G Bradley 2PFUP BUCKHOLUSE BOY (28) (The Beavity Boys) D Nicrobson 7 ft 7 _______ A Maguitre 2U-1-U PRAZER ISLAND (14) (D) (P 6 Alexandrie IR Rows 6 ft 5 _______ D Bridgenster 3-ft F1 SYMBOL OF SUCCESS (15) (D) N O T Reong Syndicate) D Willers 6 ft 0 ft Ill P SUruck U4323 THERMAL WARRIOR (199) (The Kentish Men) J Old 9 to 10 ______ C Liewellyn - 6 declared -BETTING: 5-2 Aardwelf, 3-1 Frazer Island, 7-2 Symbol Of Success, 11-2 Buckhouse Box. 8-1 Foodbroker Star, 14-1 Thermal Warrior 1998: Aardwolf 5 10 13 G Bradley 7-2 (C Brooks) 4 ran

1.25 DOUG BARROTT HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m 6f Penalty Value £4,970

1.55 HENRY VIII NOVICE CHASE (Grade 2) (CLASS C4 A) £20,000 added 2m Penaity Value £12,560

BETTING: 9-4 Space Trucker, 7-2 Hoh. Warrior, 4-1 Direct Route, 11-2 Chief's Song, 13-2 Hurricene Lamp, Queen Of Spades, 10-1 Crack On 1996: Muligan 6 11 0 A Maguire 4-6 tev (D Nicholson) 3 ran

FORM GUIDE

Champion Hurdle third SPACE TRUCKER had jumped in fine style until blundering and unshipping four fences out on his fencing bow in the race Queen Of Spades beat Direct Router (7b better here) a neck of Chefenham three weeks ago Jessica Harring ton's charge want on to open his chasing account all Haydock a week ago and white this ven though he goes unpenalised, his class can see him through. If look: of the hotiest novice chases of the season so far, with Crack On and Hoh Warrior Dirith or me notices move chases to the season so far, with Crack On and non warnor to surminers of their only chases to date. Chief's Song - successful in two of ns three chies at Kempton and Ascot and beaten only a neck by Mandy's Mantino at Cheltenham of
between - and exching chasing prospect Hurricane Lamp also under orders Perhaps.

Hoh Warnor, who impressed enormously when giving a 10-length beating to Cheryl's Lod
at Market Rasen, will prove the pick of this quartet, though Hurricane Lamp that-brother to smart but it-fated Martin's Lamp) is one to be watched with interest. David Nicholsonis runner won twice over thinger term and it would have been three except for him
failting white leafon; at the latch her or March. He lender the time to make her can't at this. falling white leading at the last here in March. He looks the type to make his mark at this gains and will be fit enough despite the 273-day lay-off. Selection: SPACE TRUCKER

2.30 MITSUBISHI SHOGUN TINGLE CREEK TROPHY CHASE (Grade 1) (CLASS A) £53,000 added 2m Penalty Value £33,110

- 7 dectared BETTING: 15-6 Kleiron Davis, 100-30 MuBigan, 7-2 Viking Flagship, 9-2 Or Royal, 6-1 Ask Toco, 33-1 Cellbate, 100-10h \$0 Alskiy
1898. Sound Man 8 to 7 R Duneroddy 10-to tax (E O'Grady) 4 cm

1996. Sound Man 8 ti 7 R Dunwoody 10-ti tax (£ O'Grady) 4 ran FORM GUIDE

MULLIGAN is favoured to turn around Haldon Gold Cup running with stablemate Viking Flagship (witner of this event in 1994 and numer-up to Sound Man in 1996) who beat him five lengths and renews malty with a 10to advantage. Only seven and open to improvement, Mustgan landed his first five chases in 1998-97 - including the Henry VII Chase on this card - and would probably have gone through that season underleated had he not toppied over at the Cheltenham Festival and at Antires His jumping is normally first-rate - it certainty was at Eveter - and should stand him in good stead over these tricky obstacles. Ask Tom rigisting connections with his lack-lustre display behind Viking Flagsish to the substance of the second time last term and apit Marthas Son and Viking Flagsish in the Queen Mother Champon Chase. (Malron Davis could finish only fourth in the latter event, having won if the year before the scored easily at the Punchestown Festival in April and comes here in good heart effect a Buert victory at Paryhouse in Occober on his return.

Selection: MULLIAM HILL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS RI)

3.05 WILLIAM HILL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £50,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £34,458 C4

William Stronger Str

GREENBACK (BEL) (14) (CD) (Jack Joseph) P Hobbs 6 to 7 M Alchards Respiritue and apots, black cap, white spots 250202 NON VINTAGE (7) (D) (Alan Menn) M Chapman 6 (D.S. . . . PAGE AND PAGE WITH CONTROL WITH Steening and cap

THE GLOBE RUNNER (20) (0) (6.3 P Barter) J.J. O'Neil 4 (10.5)

Figure Day, not cross of borture and belows, quantized cap

THE NAHRAWALI (35) (0) (C F Sparnowhawk) G L Moore 6 (0.4) Server Security and wingo hooped deeves, crange cap, brown start New INN (11) (D) (an 4) Sensori S Golings 6 (0.4). Mr S Durack (5)

White, large black spots, black cap

5.6 ≤ FORESTAL (28) (D) (BF) (Bity Maguret J Howard Johnson 5 to 1 . C McCormack (5)

Firm to black spots, park steples

6.7 ≈ DANEGOLD (15) (D) (Crouter Distributions Lid) M Charmon 5 to 1 . P Hollary V

Chairb 12-1 Ela Agapt Mol. Protestate, 16-1 Carreo enganes, 16-1 Renew, 20-1 Beasanc, Carlon Rumon. Natawali, 22-1 Major Jamie, 25-1 Forestat, 33-1 New Ins., 40-1 Punicah, Silver Groom, 50-1 Danegold, Greenback, Non Vintage 1960 Nate A Stond 5-175-5 Tormer (0-9-1 Mile Poet 6-ran FORM GUIDE ALABANG is lacking in experience but is, open to improvement. Unbeaten in both starts ast term inoring events at Market Rusen and Newcastle, Alabang made an encouraging return when beaten a couple of lengths by hotpot Good Vibes at Wotherby There are many dangers, not the less of them being Stormyfalmeeather, who won his last three races of 1996-97 and went in in Nombury on his return. He needs further than this but the Ricky tast page and uphal faish will suit Gritmes, runner-up behind Commanche Court at Punchestown in Pebuary beat that rival, who won the Thumph; a length at Leopard-stown in October on his return. However, only four and tumbered with 11st 13th, he might find one or two too good on the linal battle up the hill. Martin Pipe has won this with Corporal Cinger, Luddel Batasani Valimet and Make A Stand, so Potentate must be kept on the lingth and a Hambard of taces are lot races the term at Chrispitow and Lecester but morth and, although 11th worse off with New Irm (second at the Midtands track and similarly placed behind if Solan at Humingdoot since). Can again prove the pick of the pair Supreme Novices' Hurdle number-up Princeful, beaten a length and a half by El Agapt Mou at Ascot on his first appearance since the end of March. Can reverse form on 2b more favourable terms. Noticinally, undebated after two runs last season and too be forest to the residence. Controlled in the past of the pate Supreme Novices' Butter to the pate of the pate supreme Novices' Butter to the pate of the pate Supreme Novices' Butter to the pate of the pate Supreme Novices'.

well off a 5tb togher mark than when beating Palamon four longths at Ascot to back. Greenback an eight-length fourth but 9tb better off. Selection: 3.40 MERCURY FM NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE C4 (CLASS C) £6,000 added 2m 110yds £4,280 114 SOFYAAN (USA) (25) (D) (E Peter) Lady Hernes 4 ft 10 Fey and park stripes black cap PO-1 BALLADUR (USA) (44) (D) (Peters and Leel Mrs.) Pitman 4 ft 2 A P McCoy Engest over 1, red supp. (sellow steerer: Red cap.

Or FINAL STAB (13) (D) (Nor Sheley Dayer) C Dayer 4 to 10

Orange, within truly diamand orange and yellow chargers on sleeves, grange cap, yellow diamond GSS DEGO (S) (D) -Perc J Douglas Engineering) M Patrian 4 to 9

Matrix and rumble diabotic pumple deliver. Insure arminet: and diamond on pumple cap.

2233 NEAT FEAT (250) (D) (BR) (Food Brobers Lidt) D Beworth 6 to 9

P Holley

5 2223 NEAT FEAT (250) (D) (BF) (Food Brokers Luft) D Geworth 6 to 9
Broat and infert opartered) brown steeles, white cap
6 4:33 MILFORD SOUND (18) (Ms. Narou Narrii P Hottos 4 to 8
Ret, white chervin, frogred deteres and cap
7 23-214 RYTHM ROCK (19) (Feer Radditte) Gundidis 9 to 0. A Maguire 8
Rocal blue, white trols dismand, hooped steeless, yellow cap, royal blue dismond
Minamum weight 10st True transcare weight. Rythm Rock 9st 13to
8ETTING: 7-4 Balladus, 5-2 Sofyaan, 9-2 Diego, 11-2 Neat Feat, 8-1 Final State, 10-1 Rythm Rock,
12-1 Miltord Sound
996* Agron 5 til 11 J Osborne 7-4 fav (O Sher wood) 8 ran
FORM GUIDE
RAAL ADUR best mortest earlet Longers held Wingsmitten in October on his first appearance

FORM GUIDE

BALLADUR best market leader Loncers hell a length at Wincerton in October on his first appearance since April. The son of Nureyev will progness further and, with Tony McCoy in the saddia, can supplement Wincerton gams. Solyasan won a Dundalk maden on the Fat when with Kewin Prendengast, and changed hands for 33,000 gas at tast year's Newmarket, July Salas. Winner of his first two hundle races, both at Chepstow in October before a remote fourth to Sammarino, at Newbury, Lady Hernes, four-year-old will do much better in this lesser company. Final Stab did not account for anything of note when sconing at Ludlow but it was only his second outing and he will improve.

Selection: BALLADUR.

CHEPSTOW

1.15 Lough Tully 2.50 The Swan 1.45 Giventime 2.15 Banjo (nb) 3.20 Landed Gentry 3.50 Lord Jim GOING: Soft (Good to Soft in places). GOING: Soft (Good to Soft in places).

Left-hand, unclusing course with run-in of 240yds.

Course is on A465. Chapstow station (Candif - Gloucester line) Im. ADMISSION: Cub Sk; Tattersolls 10 (OAPs 55). CAR PARK: Free.

LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 41-177 (232%). P Hobbs 19-71 (288%). N Twiston-Davies 19-10 (172%), P Nicholls 17-74 (23%). D Nicholson 16-58 (275%), Mrs J Pitman 7-38 (184%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Thornton 5-41 (122%). D J Burchell 3-19 (158%). L Harvey 3-38 (78%). G Maude 3-82 (58%), T J Murphy 2-18 (111%). S Curran 2-20 (10%).

FAVOURITES: 150-369 (40.7%).

BLINKERED FRST TIME: Spring Double (320) (viscred).

1.15 SHANE BRODERICK APPEAL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £7,000 added 2m 4f 110yds Penalty Value £4,500

Margon and white check, che 23n-2 LOUGH TULLY (46) (D) (R A Harcods) F Jordan 7 10 5 Emarkit green, not chevrorus, shiped sleeves, hoosed cap 120-44 DASHINIG DOLLAR (B) (Methy Racing) C Marin 6 10 3 Dark bibe, pink braces, pink cap

-8 declared -BETTING: 5-2 Lough Yulty, 7-2 Miles Robinto, 4-1 Sesame Seed, 5-1 Jet Rules, 13-2 Secret Ser-vics, 72-1 Dashing Dollar, 14-1 Holdmickus, 16-1 Royal Mounthrowne bit I lays.

vice, 12-7 Deshing Dollar, 14-1 Holdmoree, 12-1 1996: Cadougoid 5 10 13 A P McCoy 4-1 (M Pipe) 8 ran

FORM GUIDE

Jet Rules won the Persian War Premier Norces' Hurde here two seasons ago and the soft ground suits him. He was sent chasing last season and looked promising in that sphere despite making several mistakes on his final outing at Warwick in February (the good to firm going was probably against him). But one who stands out further down the scale is MISS ROBERTO, who was no match for Saint Cel at Haydock last month, but acquitted herself well under 12st 2b (including 6b penalty). Saint Cel has franked the form by winning again at Uttoestax Miss Roberto was below her best – she had been in season shortly before – when disappointing at Bangor in October, but she won well at Worcester afterwards and trainer John O'Shea expressed the view that she was up to winning a rise hervitean. She was a sin-kenrith third to Commanche Run at Punchestown last Febter answerds and trainer John Osshea expressed in view that are was up to winning a nice handloop. She was a six-length third to Commanche Run at Punchestown last Feb-ruary and likes cut undertoot. Sesame Seed has gone well fresh in the past, but it was still a decent effort to win under first fills in soft ground at Worcester on his reappear-ance it days ago. This sound jumper comes into the reckoning along with Lough Tully, who improved last season and ran well on his return to action here in October, firstning second to Tidal Force over this distance.

1.45 JACK BROWN BOOKMAKER HANDICAP BBC1 CHASE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3m 2f 110yds Penalty Value £7,119

1986: Samler 7 10 4 D Bridgwater 9-1 (P Hobbs) 7 ran FORM GUIDE

This trip will take some staying in the mud and Robert Thomton's claim will be invaluable on TURNING TRIX, who was better than ever last season but did not get much luck in the Grand National. He had a tough task anyway from 10b out of the handicap, but was hampered twice. Perhaps he will have another go in the spring, but there should be a good handicap coming his way in the interim and lack of a recent run will not be a problem. He goes best fresh and has won first time up for the past two seasons. He is only inactionally higher in the weights than when bearing Sater Stephanie and River Mandate in a three-mile Newbury handicap in March. River Mandate, who also contested the Grand National, was a first-time-up winner in the mud last season and missed the 1995-96 campaign, so there is some miseage left in him. Giventime is probably high enough in the weights, but more improvement is possible given a test of stamma like this. He found the trip too short when a running-on second to Super Tactics over an extended two mises and a half at Kempton 17 days back. Dom Samoural is in good form, but two recent and a rear at remport it days been come sensorial is in good form but two recent hard races could leave a mark, while Orswell Lad is a real mudlark and further ran would bolster this second-season handicapper. Dour stayer Killeshin rarely had ground con-ditions in his favour last season.

Selection: TURNING TRIX

[2.15] CORAL REHEARSAL LIMITED HANDICAP BBC1 CHASE (Grade 2) (CLASS A) £30,000 added BBC1 3m Penalty Value £18,534

FORM GUIDE

BANJO could be another winner for the Nicholson camp. This smart French-bred has had an operation for colic since winning such races as the Sofly Isles (Sandown) and Mumm Molling (Antires) and was having his first race for almost two years when pulled up in the Gold Cup last March. There is a good chance he will bounce back this season and he lucked off in the right way by bearing What A Hand and Coome Hill at Chetharham (3m 3t-plus) last month. The softer ground will suit and he could be a major Gold Cup candidate this season, although the Welsh National is his first big target. See More Bushness shaped well on his first start since February when third to Surry Bay in the Edward Harmer Memoral at Haydock 17 days ago.

Selection: BANJO FORM GUIDE

2.50 GOOD LUCK NOVICE SELLING HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,500 added 2m 4f 110yds Penalty Value £1,898

3.20 FLURRY KNOX NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 3f 110yds Penalty Value £3,625 GP3-1 RIVER BAY (14) (D) River wood Raong) Mss H Kingit 6 10 3 ... R Thornton (3) 400-01 (10) (C) (B M Yn) Mrs 5 Williams 6 10 12 ... S McNeill 46P6 CHARLIE'S FOLLY (266) (Duncan Heath) B De Haan 6 10 12 ... I Lawrence 279-52 LANDED GENTRY (7) (D) A W Bel 8 Son Ltd J O'Shea 8 10 12 . Michael Brenners (3) 172-43 SPRING DOUBLE (15) (D) Michael Lorne Bernmann) N Twiston-Davies 6 10 12 C Maude V Cnto STORMY PASSAGE (246) (D) (Peer Luft) P Hobbs 7 10 12 ... A Thornton Court of Court 1 A Behber May 1 A Behber May 1 Storme Processes 13-2 Spring Davies (15) 1 A Behber May 1 Storme Processes 13-2 Spring Davies (15) 1 A Behber May 1 Storme Processes 13-2 Spring Davies (15) 1 A Behber May 1 Spring Rose (15) 1 Spring Davies (15) 1 A Behber May 1 Spring Rose (15) 1 Spring Davies (15) 1 Sp

ble, 33-1 Charlie's Folly 1996 Or Royal 5 11 10 A P McCoy 5-4 fav (M Pipe) 6 ram 3.50 DECEMBER MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS D) 24,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value \$3,155

BEAR HUG (F67) it Jones) M Steppard 4 ti 5
P. BOLD BUSTER (F33) (R8 Exors Late Elzabeth Histhes) I Balding 4 ti 5 R Thomston (3)
P. BOSERT POWER (16) (Mrs Lorda M Williams) D Burchell 5 ti 5
D J Burchell
FITZBAURICE (28) (Avrs Lorda M Williams) D Burchell 5 ti 5
Siechell
RTZBAURICE (28) (Avrs Lorda M Williams) D Burchell 5 ti 5
Siechell
RTZBAURICE (28) (Avrs Lorda M Williams) D Burchell 5 ti 5
Siechell
RTAILCLEIGH MAN (368) (H R C Catherwood) P Hobbs 7 ti 5
Mr R Wildger (7) CC-9P- KARICLEIGH MAN (389) (H R C Catherwood) P Hobts 7 ft 4.3F KING OF THIEVES (8) (J D I 8el) C Marn 5 ft 5 LORD JIM (F42) (Mrs S Y Thomas) J Old 5 ft 5 3000- MAZIRAH (F162) (Mrshael Applety) R Curts 6 ft 5 5 NGELLD (18) John Buogli R Alme 5 ft 5 25- SIBERIAN HENRY (298) (C S Taleson) B Smart 4 ft 5 (55-2 SOL MUSIC 22) (The G 8 P Partnershop J King 5 ft 5 POOP) STORM POINT (558) (R J Part) H Hove 9 ft 5 440-44 CRYSTAL JEWEL (22) (Mrs babel Palmer) P Hobts 5 ft 0 | Lawrence 2- SOLAZZI (FR) (274) (Mrs Saran Faults) L G Cottrell 5 ft 0

2- Society (pring (24) (MYS Schall Patriot) of Colleges (MYS) (19) 18-18 (Pring (24) (19) 18-18 (19

WOLVERHAMPTON (AW)

12.35 Confronter 1.05 Killarney Jazz 2.45 STATE OF CAUTION (nap) 3.20 Centre Stalls 3.55 Rex Mundi 2.10 Jubilee Scholar 4.25 Prix De Clermont

STALLS: 71 - outside; rest - inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: High from 81 to 1m 4L

Fibresand, left-hand, oval course.

Course is N of town on A449. Wolverhampton station 1m. ADMISSION: Club £15: Tat-

ocuses is the following of parmond Club 94); Viewing Restaurant £25.90 including entrance and meal CAR PARK: Free.

■ LEADING TRAINERS: It Hollinshed 60-560 (103%), M Johnston 53-233 (22.7%), J Benry 43-300 (143%), A Bailey 34-233 (19%), P Hastem 33-185 (178%), P Evans 30-319 (94%).

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: G Duffield 27-81 (149%), F Lynch 24-237 (131%), A Clark 22-96 (112%), Dean McKoown 22-209 (105%), T Williams 20-208 (95%), D Holland 18-120 (15%). ● FAVOURITES: 398-1232 (32.3%). BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Dance To The Beet (1.35), Zermatt (2.10), Mr Majica (2.45), Rex

12.35 ANGLO HOLT CONSTRUCTION HANDICAP (CLASS F) (Div I) £3,300 added 1m 1f 79yds Penalty Value £2,294

1.05 HOLIDAY INN GARDEN COURT WOLVERHAMPTON MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £4,550 added 2YO 6f Penalty Value £3,234

O DESERT MIRAGE (69) (The Counters of Derby) P Chapple-Hyam 9 0 T Quien 13 DRYAD (Bran D Carde) N Litaroden 9 0 S Whitworth 2 2 KILLARNEY JAZZ (50) (N P Buile Developments Limber) J Whatton 9 0 ... T Lucas 6 0 MISALSE (28) (Nhs C Barday-Nactitetam Park Racing Vill) P Hastam 9 0 ... P Goode (7) 5 POLAR MIST (Net Greg) Sr M Prescrit 9 0 G Duffield 8 00 TAJ MARAL (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 9 0 Doan McKenwn 12 CREST MICE (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 9 0 Doan McKenwn 12 CREST MICE (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 9 0 Doan McKenwn 12 CREST MICE (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 9 0 Doan McKenwn 12 CREST MICE (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 9 0 Doan McKenwn 12 CREST MICE (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 9 0 Doan McKenwn 12 CREST COUNTER (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 12 CREST COUNTER (19) (Guy Reed) C Thoman 12 CREST COUNTE US LIFEE SMILE (8) IN 3 National S C STREAM 8 S ... W J O'Commor 1
40062 PHANTOM RING (28) (Ray Sates) A Sates 8 9 ... J Bookey (7) 7
453063 SADA (26) (Times of Wigant C Dayer 8 9 ... Flynch 3
0 SNARWAY LADY (21) (Streams Contracts) B McMahon 8 9 ... L Newton 9
03 TREBLE TERM (40) (Ms 7 J United) P Nation 8 9 ... A Clark 4

- 13 declared -SETTING: 3-1 Sada, 4-1 Desert Mirage, 5-1 Polar Mist. 6-1 Wolfhunt. 7-1 Treble Term, 12-1 Killer ney Jazz, Prantom Ring, Little Emily, 14-1 Indian Splandour, 29-1 Dryad, 33-1 others 1996. F4 For The Job 2 9 0 T Sprake 10-1 (W G M Turner) drawn (5) 9 ran

1.35 MANCHESTER SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) £2,875 added 2YO of Penalty Value £1,999 445300 FIGAWRI (12) (D) (Clear Height Racing) S Dow 92 _____ P Dos (7) 6 2.10 ANGLO HOLT CONSTRUCTION HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,300 added 1m 1f 79yds Penalty Value £2,294

1996. Barrel Of Hope 4 9 6 O Petrs (3) 12-1 (J.L. Eyre) drawn (12) 13 ran

2.45 TOTE JACKPOT HANDICAP (CLASS C) £10,000 C4

Dank blue, red chemon, red seeves, clark blue ermiets, dank blue cep, red star ### State Of Castion, 5-1 Primo Lare, 6-1 British Red, 7-1 Forcing Bid, Gools Storm. Chevit, 10-1 Tenn Creeks, 12-1 Mr Bergerac, 14-1 Mr Majica, Jiberten, 16-1 Sea-Deer, Astract 1996. Circ Born Born 4-3 C G Faziline: 11 11-2 (M Belt) Clark (7) 12 ron

FORM GUIDE FORM GUIDE

PRIMO LARA was well beaten the crity time he has raced on Floresand – but that was in a Southwell maden on the second of two juvenile starts and it will come as no surprise if he makes a race of it with the proven all-weather performers today. Pick of them must be State Of Caution, who has beaten several of today's opponents in compling a hat thick on this course. There is no reason why he should not go well argain. Primo Lara looks botter than ever judged on last month's will under Richard Quart at Redcar, a race in which Geeffe Storm was about two lengths away swift, with Mir Bergerac ninth and

Sea-Deer 11th. That Redcar race was over six furlongs, yet Primo Lara is more at homover this distance. Perhaps best from the front, Primo Lara would have been better of over this distance Perhaps best from the front, Primo Lara would have been better of with a lower draw but he might be good enough, nevertheless, John fifth of 28 behind Wildwood Flower in the Ayr Gold Cup. Gaetic Storm promises to stay this distance and Mark Johnston's horses take to this surface readily enough. But Mir Bergerac needs to improve on recent efforts here and Sea-Deer is in a fair lougher race than the claimer in which he ran The Happy For Io a head. First-time blinkers enabled Forcing Bild to beat Mr Bergerac (third) almost seven lengths three weeks ago, but the 11 b rise plus the ex tra furiono will make life townher for him

3.20 WULFRUN STAKES (Listed race) (CLASS A) C4

BETTING: 11-10 Centre Stalls, 9-2 Running Stag. 5-1 Prince Of Dental, 11-2 Russian Music, 12-1 Farmesi, 14-1 Loch Bering, 33-1 Puzzlement SS6 Prince Of Ancros 6 B 13 J Red 7-2 (C Wall street (7) 13 ran FORM GUIDE

CENTRE STALLS incohed last of mue behind Air Express in the Queen Elizabeth A Stakes at Accol in September, but his neck second to Allied Forces in the Queen Anne Stakes (Group Two) at the Poyal meeting (Ali-Royal third) stamps him as the class act in this line-up. SIA. Centre Stabs is up against useful horse who mapful be more at home than he is over the extended nine furiongs, a trip that looks ideal for Prince Of Denial. An improving handicapper, he can make his presence left at Usted level Like Centre Stabs, Russian Music might be better off over a stightly shorter journey but he is useful on his day and versable, able to win from the front or from off the pace. Running Stag has nin fair races in Listed and higher company, but the fact remains that he has just a Lingfie weather maiden to his credit 3.55 LONDON HANDICAP (CLASS E) (Div I) £4,025 added 1m 4f Penalty Value £2,960

4.25 LONDON HANDICAP (CLASS E) (Div II) £4,025 added 1m 4f Penalty Value £2,960

500046 PRIVATE AUDIENCE (USA) (8) (Mo H Lovy) W Max 4 20 0 C Linethor (3) 7
40440 CHARNY/DOD JACK (USA) (7) (Andrew lich) I Campbel 4 9 11 T G MicLaughilin 9
6335 CHEROMEE FLIGHT (40) (C) (Silver Knight Euhhours Lin) S Molto 3 9 7 M Wighem 2
20250 ASS (178) (D) (R) Richarcon (Migan)) M Johnston 3 9 5 D Moltand 5
00256 BONJOUR (J310) N/Rindar (Carl Engineering) Lin) I Semple 7 3 D Moltand 5
20255 LE GRAND GOUSIER (J72) (Min S C Dovers) R J Proc 3 8 11 Deen MicKoomn 6 B
30000 AFRICAN-PARD (23) (J S Fox and Sons) D Haydin Jones 5 8 1 T WIRLIance 8
0-5054 PRIX DE CLERMONT (11) (The Jie Stream Partner/sho) G Lews 3 8 0 R Firench (3) 3

BETTING: 5-2 Private Audionce. 7-2 Cherokee Flight, 9-2 Atrican-Pard, 6-1 Prix De Clermont, 7-1 As-Is, 8-1 Cheromond Jack, 12-1 Mercury, Le Grand Gousler, 20-1 Bonjour

والمستنبيني والمنافر والمنافي والرائية المعالية والمراج والمارات والماف المعاف فالمعد فيومان

PUNTERS' GUIDE

CHEPSTOW

1.15: LOUGH TULLY, five lengths second to Tidal Force over today's course and distance in October, can go one better. Sesame Seed looks the danger.

an inadequate 2m4f110yd at

Kempton last time, is a course and

1.45: GIVENTIME, 11 lengths runner-up to Super Tactics over

distance winner and looks fairly handicapped. Dom Samourai may pose most problems. 2.15; BANJO, who heat What A Hand by 11/2 lengths over over 3m3f1ffyds at Cheltenham on his reappearance, is lightly-raced, holds ample scope for further improvement and looks set for a

good season. See More Business may give him the most to do.

SANDOWN 1.55: DIRECT ROUTE, a neck second to Queen Of Spades in the Grade 2 November Novice Chase over 2m at Cheltenham last time. reopposes on 7lb betters terms today and can turn the tables.

2.30: KLAIRON DAVIS, who trotted up by 11 lengths from Fiftysevenchannels over 2m at Fairyhouse on his seasonal debut. remains a top-class chaser at this distance and will be hard to beat. Viking Flagship may prove the most potent threat.

HYPERION'S

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TV TIPS 3.05: POTTER'S GALE, who beat New Inn by seven lengths in a 2m handicap hurdle at Leicester last time, remains well handicapped and should go well.

3.40: DIEGO, who ran the in-form Saint Ciel to six lengths in a 2m handicap burdle at Uttoxeter last time, can go one better here. Sofyzan may pose most problems.

Atabang looks the biggest danger.

WOLVERHAMPTON 2.45: STATE OF CAUTION, who completed a hat-trick when beating Sir Joey by 11/2 lengths over today's course and distance in November, is still leniently treated and should be hard to beat. Primo Lara may be the one to follow

short work of his rivals today. Run-

ning Stag may be the most potent

3.20: CENTRE STALLS, eight lengths ninth and last to Air Express in the Group One Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot over Im in September, takes a massive drop in class here and, if able to reproduce anything like his turf form on Fibresand, will make

WILLIAM HILL HANDICAP HURDLE - 10-YEAR-TALE 1987 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 F 1 3 1 12 1 Winner's place in betting: 1 2 0 1 3 1 3 1 3 0 6-4 9-2 12-1 11-4 7-1 5-4 13-2 4-5 15-2 9-1 105 10.7 100 1012 100 102 112 102 1010 10.5 Vinning weights: 5 9 4 5 5 6 6 5 5 5 Profit or loss to £1 stake: Pavourites +£0.30 Second Pavourites -£4.50 Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in lest race: 40% Shortest-priced winners: Relicel (1994) 4-5 ongest-priced winner: Ladelt (1989) 12-1 Top trainers: M C Pipe (5) – Corporal Clinger (1988), Liadett (1989), Balasani (1991), Valfinet (1982), Make A Stand (1995) Top jockey: M Perrett (2) - Corporal Clinger (1988), Balasani (1991) J Lower (2) - Liadett (1989), Valfinet (1992)

FIRST SHOW

In the 1.45 at Chepstow, River improved with racing this sea-Martina, a tough sort who has

Chepstow — 1.45 52 52 11-4 ____3-1 Turning Trix 3-1_ Dom Samoural 10-3 3-1 Little Martina 13-2 7-1 n-2 Rheer Namentië 13-2 7-1 ANC Express dbt dat Ocewell Lad 8-1 8-1 Gashin <u>30-1</u> 20-1 25-1 Fact you a resear the odds olsow 1, 2

Sandown — 2.30 Kla<u>iron Davis 13-8 13-8 13-8 13-8</u> 7-2 7-2 7-2 7-2 Viting Flagship 7-2 4-1 7-2 7-2 Or Royal 41 41 92 51 Ask Tom 7-1 11-2 6-1 6-1

H - William Hill L - Lectroless T - Total

33-1 33-1 40-1 40-1 Oh So Filisty 65-1 100-1 50-1 66-1 Each way, a lith the odds, places 1, 2 C - Corel H - Wilson Hill L - Lachroles, T - Total

Sandown --- 3.05

Horse	<u>C</u> _	<u> </u>	L	<u>T</u>
Stormyfairweather	5-1	11-2	11-2	11-2
Grimes	11-2	11-2	6-1	13-2
Alabang	10-1	9-1	8-1	8-1
Potter's Gate	8-1	10-1	9-1	8-1
Princelul	10-1	10-1	8-1	11-1
Chai-Yo	12-1	10-1	11-1	10-1
Ba Agapi Mou	10-1	12:1	10-1	14-1
Polentale	12-1	71-1	2-1	14-1
Caritio Brigante	16-1	JK- 1	16-1	12-1
Kerard	16-1	16-1	_2:1_	14-1
Globe Romer	16-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Nahanel	16-1	15-1	20-1	20-1
Belistor	25-1	16-1	20-1	20-1
Forestal	25-1	25-1	25-1	16-1
Major Jamie	28-1	<u>25-1</u>	18-1	25-1
New Iran	33-1	33-1	33-1	33-1
Silver Groom	33-1	33-1	40-1	33-1
Punjah	33-1	50-1	50-1	40-1
<u>Danegold</u>	50-1	50-1	50-1	66-1
Greenback	50-1	50-1	100-1	50-1
Hon Virtage	50-1	50-1	100-1	40-1

C - Coral H - William Hill L - Ladbroles, T - Total

Mandate, who has been off the son, are both 7-1 with Ladtrack for a while, and Little brokes-the Tote, who quote the doubtful A N C Express and may therefore also have a Rule 4 deduction on their prices, go just 11-2. In the 2.30 at Sandown Ask

Tom, who went well for a long way before pulling up on his reappearance, is 7-1 with Coral - William Hill are offering just In the 3.05 at Sandown, Bel-

hator, who is held in high regard by his trainer and figures in some Champion Hurdle lists, is 25-1 with Ladbrokes – William 3112 to DE The hill go just 16-1, Punkah, who is reported to

be quietly fancied each-way by a few good judges in the Lambourn area, is 50-1 with William Hill and Ladbrokes - Coral offer just 33-1. And Non Vintage, a perfectly

solid performer, is 100-1 with Ladbrokes - the Tote go just

Coral bet on the 2.15 at Chepstow: 7-4 Bario, 5-2 Indian Tracker, 11-4 See More Business, 6-1 Air Shot, 14-1 Greenhil Tare Away. The Tote but on the 2.45 at Wolver-hampton: 9-2 British Hed, State Of Cau-ton, 6-1 Forcing Bid, Phmo Lara. 9-1 Chewit, 8-1 Twin Creeks, 10-1 Gaetic Storm, Mr Berg-erac, 15-1 Astrac, Jibereen, Sea-Deer. 20-1 Mr Mejica.

lan Davies

THE INDEPENDENT RACING SERVICES **|0891 261 +** LIVE COMMENTARIES RESOLTS SANDOWN 971 981 | SANIZOWN | 971 | 981 | 982 | 982 | 983 | 983 | TOWCESTER | 974 | 984 | 984 | 984 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 985 | 0891 261 970

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The jump jockey Tony McCoy is charging towards domination of his sport at an alarming rate. His critics say he will fall victim to burnout. McCoy says maybe, but not for 10 years.

As he marches contemptuously through this his fourth season in Britain, Tony McCoy is closing in on 600 career winners. At this remorseless rate the Irishman will not only bear Peter Scudamore's career record of 1.678 winners, he will exceed it by a further 1,000 at his anticipated point of retirement in 10 years' time. A P McCoy describes Richard Dunwoody as a tely and would earn £100 a the most obsessive jockey in the week for his effort. "He could weighing room. He must be jok-

Anthony Peter McCoy has ridden so many winners already that he seems to have been around for a generation. It is quite arresting, however, to consider that his first ever hurdles race, at Leopardstown, was on the day Jodami and Mark Dwyer won the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Since then there has been the conditional jockeys' championship in his lum. He left at 14 without a sinfirst campaign over the Irish Sea, followed by two titles among the fully-fledged ranks. Earlier this year McCoy, aged 22, became only the fourth man to ride the winner of the Champion Hurdle (Make A Stand) and Gold Cup (Mr Mul- Jim Bolger does not ask the staff ligan) at the same Cheltenham to form a seated circle to discuss Festival. His booking is now generally accepted as providing ant out. McCoy does not smoke and chops are now off the cane his mount with a fifth leg.

Yet his achievements do not count as a speck of grit for Tony McCov. As the bandwagon rolls on, he would prefer to crack the than look at the mileposts in his slipstream. "I don't want to the present and how I'm flying. because that's the moment you fall over and make yourself look like a clown." he says. matters to me now is tomorrow. was on.

what I'm going to ride on Saturday and possible winners at Cheltenham this season." And, of course, the Christmas sales of his recently published biog-

If you look in the past, though, you find what has made this near mechanical man before us. The son of a Catholic horse breeder from Toomebridge, Co Antrim, McCoy was brought up as one of six in buecolic Ulster, close to the inland sea of Loch Neagh and on the banks of Northern Ireland's longest river, the Bann,

By the time he was 12, Me-Coy was an unfettered truant. spending most of the day at the yard of a local man, Billy Rock. He could ride, and control, the biggest horses almost immedido the work of three grown men," Rock says.

McCoy was not a daft lad, but the subject he enjoyed most was not on the school curricu-

BY RICHARD EDMONDSON

gle O-level to his name and joined the Flat yard of Jim Bolger. Coolculien has produced some mighty racing names, both human and equine, and none was brought up gently. If anyone is caught smoking at the yard, the topic. He boots the miscreto this day and the strongest brew he takes is dict coke.

The jockey found his master as terrifying as a tiger in the bedroom and it is testimony to his whip on the team ahead rather fortitude that he disobeyed Bolger in moving to Britain in 1994. By then the tyro had brolook back or even think about ken his leg on the Coolcullen gallops, an accident that erased any lingering notion that McCoy would appear on the Flat. During recuperation his body start-"Your luck can only last a cer- ed to change and did not stop tain amount of time, so you're until it reached its present how long it's been going on. I've splayed on the dungeon rack been very lucky so far. What while a particularly nasty shift

of pee pills and sticking his fingers down the throat, but now just settles for surviving on various natural gases. "My weight is a worse problem than for most jockeys because I'm five foot 11 inches," he says. "But I've got used to it and I can live with the fact that, for the rest of my days riding, I'm never going to wake up in a morning and

won't happen."



The real McCoy: "I can't imagine there is a single jockey in the weighing room who wouldn't like to be suffering from the sort of burn-out I'm supposed to be getting at the moment"

McCoy's favourite steaks ting chin, snooker hall com- soon put him in the sidings. The plexion and the sort of retro du jour (although the way things haircut they used to display in are going they may soon be off bands such as Chicory Tip. He all our menus). The jockey has has a capacity for self-sacrifice attempted the black techniques that comes to few. For him the grind, the hunger and the travelling of his sport is surpassed by the rewards, financial and emotional, of winning, "You'vegot to want winners, be greedy, and I don't mean being ignorant greedy," he says. "You've got to want success every day, and when you get it that makes you greedy for some more."

There are some who be- through it. frightened to look back and see shape, as if its owner had been have a fried breakfast. It just lieve the McCov way does not His physique apart. Tony starving, 70,000 miles travelling 10 years if things keep hap- O The Real McCov. Hodder & McCoy is made notable by a jut- a year and high expectation will pening for me. There will plen- Stoughton £10.99.

jockey himself, who would rather have a finger off than a day, snorts at this theory.

"I can't imagine there is a single jockey in the weighingroom who wouldn't like to be suffering from the sort of burnout I'm supposed to be getting at the moment," he says, "I love going racing every day, especially as I usually get two or three really decent chances. I think a lot of people get more hurned out thinking about what I'm doing than I do going

"I can cope with feeling as foster a lengthy career, that the - burned-out as this for the next - place,"

ty of time for me to relax in 10 years' time when I can't ride horses any longer. But tomorrow is another day, never mind 10 years' time. If I keep riding consistently for another 10 years I'll be the happiest man alive, but when you're a jump jockey your fingers are permanently erossed.

"This is a game that becomes obsessive and when you ride winners consistently it's something you want more and more of every day. Anyone in my position would become obsessive too, but maybe it was being that way that got me here in the first

L is for . . .

Law: Of which there is about

as much in the world of betting as there was in Tombstone before Wyatt Earp rode into town. Bets are considered to be a private matter of honour, and thus beyond the reach of the courts on the basis that, well. Good Gawd, if you can't trust a man's word, don't y'know, harrumph, harrumph, what in blazes can you trust? This was all fine and dandy in the days when Lord X would pit his best colt against that of Lord Y for a modest side-bet of, say, half of Gloucestershire, before heading off to string up an adolescent or two for sheepstealing. In 1997, when British consumers are, by and large, fairly well protected against the less scrupulous members of the business world, it is hopelessly inadequate and thus, you might suppose, an obvious concern for a go-ahead Government with a mandate for change. Early indications, however. are that New Labour is as in-

Ladies' race: And also for Lydia Pearce, whose pre-eminence in such events was something of a blank cheque for punters through much of the 1990s, Races for amateur riders of either sex are generally contested by poor, unreliable individuals of very doubtful stamina - and sadby, the horses are even worse. As such, they are hardly the ideal betting medium, but if you always back the best jockey, you can usually be sure that, whatever other shortcomings the beast may have, it is the best part of a stone well-in with its rivals. drawing to a close, but one heir apparent is Emma Ramsden, (that's Ramsden, as in the trainer Lynda and Jack, her professional gam-

different to our problems as

the last lot.

Lent, not lost: Arguably the most stupid aphorism breeding ground for cod philosophy that is the average betting shop. Your selection has been beaten but it didn't get a clear run, needed furusually and) the jockey was backed it with is lent, not lost. and will undoubtedly be repaid, with generous interest. in the not too distant future. This belief also appears in Chapter One of the Teach Yourself Guide to Economics, by Nick Leeson.

bler husband).

Ladbrokes: Established in 1886 in the Warwickshire village from which it takes its name, Ladbrokes moved its operation to London wellbefore the First World War, which was the complete opposite of that which it pitch-



GREG WOOD THE A-Z OF BETTING

Ladbrokes were turf ac-

countants to the aristocracy tand even now. so rumour has it, several members of the Royal family would not dream of punting with anyone else). From their credit office in Burlington Street. Ladbrokes were purveyors of ruin to the landed gentry on scale that would be matched only by the introduction of death duty, a couple of generations later. The business plan changed radically, however, when Cyril Stein, son of the legendary pre-War rails bookmaker Snouty Parker, took over as chairman in 1966. Stein was quick to appreciate the potential of off-course betting shops, which had been legalised five years earlier, and through a combination of tireless acquisition and an approach to the competition which was straight out of Jans, built the firm into Britain's biggest bookie, before expanding elsewhere. "Is that the best deal you've ever done?" he was famously asked after adding Hilton Hotels to the Ladbrokes portfolio for £n45 million in 1987. "It's the best deal anyone's ever done." Cyril replied, and even in the post-Stein years, his firm exhibits Unfortunately, Mrs Pearce's the same egalitarian willingcareer is now seems to be mess to impoverish anyone, whatever their class.

proven existence of which is 500-1 with William Hill, a price that must surely persuade even the most gullible of Sassenachs that the Scottish Tourist Board has been ever invented, even in the rich - having them on these past 60 years. Novelty odds on such events as aliens landing in Trafalgar Square, Lord Lucan turning himself in to the police or Manchester City winther, ran green and/or (it's ning the Premiership are generally nothing more than a jerk. Thus, the money you an easy source of silly season publicity for the bookies, and of no interest at all to serious punters. A few optimists. though, have 500-1 about a British winner of the men's singles at Wimbledon before the turn of the century safely hidden away - (the price is now down to single figures). When Meeca took over William Hill a few years ago. meanwhile, only one major stumbling block emerged when the accountants went through Hills' books. The where it cultivated a clientele multi-million pound buyout is said to have come close to stalling - hecause Mecca did es to today. Snotty to the not want to take on Hills' E3m. point of rudeness about who - liability over the reappearthey would do business with. ance of Elvis.

Loch Ness Monster: The

Flagship to be the leading light on a day of riches

The Festival arrives early at Sandown on a day which offers punters a serious alternative to numbers and fruit machines. Greg Wood studies the form.

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Amid the backslapping at Coral headquarters as the bookmakers revealed profits of £33m this mediums with much fatter and week, there was a message for racing which offered less cause for celebration.

This pile of cash was not the result of punters jostling their toe-to-toe against any other atthe horses, but rather a result alone is arguably the most at-

49s and slot machines. Since bookies pay a levy to racing only on racing turnover, this is not a trend they are likely to disturb. The turf's market share among off-course gamblers, so the bookmakers will tell you, will continue to decline, and since they are doing everything possible to shift punters to betting guaranteed profits, it could be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

On an afternoon like today, though, racing can still stand

with the Grade Two Rehearsal Chase at Chepstow and two good all-weather races from Wolverhampton, there are nine

RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Princeful (Sandown 3.05) NB: Ambleside (Chepstow 3.20)

televised races in the space of two and a half hours.

The Tingle Creek Chase brings together three of the first four home in last year's Queen way into Coral shops to bet on traction. The Sandown card Mother Champion Chase, and two chasers in Mulligan and Or

around, Klairon Davis is expected to set off a warm favourite, but the worry for his supporters must be that he does not find his best form until the spring. There is also a suspicion that, when the ground is not testing and the pace not strong, two miles is a bit sharp. for him. Klairon Davis may be vulnerable today, and Viking Flagship (next best 2.30) is an

obvious value bet. Adrian Maguire, David Nicholson's stable jockey. chooses Mulligan, but then, he did that a few weeks ago and Viking Flagship beat him Mini-

of the low-cost, high-margin tractive weekend jumps fixture. Royal with the potential to line. Jugan should have improved for new arrivals in betting shops like this side of Aintree, and what up for that race next time that, but Viking Flagship, too, has every right to come on. The Grade Two Henry VIII

Novice Chase - won by Mulligan 12 months ago ~ is fiercely competitive, with Chief's Song (1.55) only a tentative choice, while the William Hill Handicap Hurdle also appears - at first sight anyway - to dely solution. This is more than just another handicap, with Celtic Shot and, last year, Make A Stand both wanning this on the

way to the Champion Hurdle. Cirimes, the right capable of making similar improvement. craised home on his seasonal debut at Leopardstown in De-

tober, and is just 7lb higher today. His chance is obvious, but in such a big field, others make more appeal at the prices, NEW INN (nap 3.05) must be the bet at 33-1. He has returned in fine form this season and has the leading young rider Seamus Durack taking 5lb off his back.

Elsewhere, Bells Life (2.15) could be the value in the Rehearsal Chase, while Giventime (1.45) also stands every chance. Centre Stalls would be a certainty for the Wultrun Stalles at Wolverhampton were it run on grass, but may be worth opposing with Farmost (3.20). proven on Fibresand.

Results, page 21

WETHERBY

12.40 Ardronan 1.10 Edelweis Du Moulin 1.40 No More Hassle 2.10 Strath Royal 2.40 Real Tonic 3.15 Second Fiddle

GOING: Good to Soft.

GOING: Good to Soft.

Cufft-hand oval circust. Pun-en of 200yds signity uphil.

Gourse & NE of town on B1224 near junction of A58 and A1.

Gourse & NE of town on B1224 near junction of A58 and A1.

ADMISSION: Cub & 131 (accompanied under-16s free); Tatternalis.

St. Course & (OAPs £150) CAR PARK: Free.

LEADING TRANNERS: Mrs M Reveley 44-776 (25%). G Richards.

4-102 (223%). D Nicholson 17-64 (256%). T Easterby 17-77 (221%).

GLEADING JOCKEYS: P Carberry 11-4 (25%). B Storey 7-81 (86%).

GLEADING JOCKEYS: P Carberry 11-4 (25%). B Storey 7-81 (86%).

GEADING JOCKEYS: S3-449 (43%).

GRAVOURITES: S3-449 (43%).

BLRIKERED FIRST TIME: Master Boston (240).

12.40 STEVE HUMBLES BIRTHDAY NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £3.650 added 2m 7f

7 S0455/ ORGAN RECITAL (925) O Bertran 8 TI O . M. Brennan 5 652-3 REVOLT (18) (BF) T Easterby 5 TI O L. Wyer 9 P1FF6 PHARTOOMARNY (24) B Mactaggart 7 TO 3 ... B Storey BETTING: 2-1 Ardronson, 11-4 No Climmidde, 100-30 Revolt. 9-2 Artic Fox, 8-7 Philadean, 16-1 Climical Coustin, 20-1 others 1.10 DICK WARDEN NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

20-21 DAMN MSSION (18) (C) (D) G Forces 5-11 P Carberry
2 00-25 DAMN MSSION (18) (C) (D) T Easterby 5-11 5 L Wyer B
2 00-25 DAMN MSSION (18) (C) (D) T Easterby 5-11 5 L Wyer B
2 00-25 PELLS LIKE GOLD (574) G Rachards 3 n C P Nives
4 554-20 MARTRE DE MUSSIOLE (243) IF TOOL (18) G R Guess
5 461-1 PIRREVALUE (23) (CD) M W Easterby 6 n C B Storey
6 PG-58 POCKETTE CASTLE 20) Ms S Barrad (6) 7 n 0 ft J Cuffen (7)
7 6 RYSANSHYN (401) R Johnson 5 0 9 - 7 declared BETTING: 45 Edulwois Du Nordin, 2-1 Dawn Musslon, 6-1 Purcyalue, 12-1
Freits Like Gold, 1-1 Mattre 0s Musslow, 2-1 Others

1.40 ATS HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C)

多級市 SAINT CIEL (USA) (9) (D) デルタンドンド F Corporty - 9 declared -9 declared - 9 dec

2.10 WHARFE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £10,066 added 3m 1f 54CT STRATH ROYAL (S) (CD) C 5-4ms (CD) T M Brennon 2011 COLONE, IN CHIEF (2011 (CD) 3-5-4ms (CD) T P C (MCP) P58-2 WILDER (CD) (CD) 3-5-4ms (CD) T P C (MCP) COLONE (CD) (CD) (CD) 3-5-4ms (CD) T P C (MCP) T P C

Montennusgist his line language council to their special factor BETTING: 10-11 Strath Royal levens Colonel in Chief 10-1 Rodins: 25-1 'EMMERDALE' SILVER ANNIVERSARY

2.40 HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) \$9.500 added 2m 4f 110yds 5 declared 5ETTING, 11-4 Cumbran Childrege → 2 Beachy Hood, 5-2 Reel Tonic,
 5-1 Macgeorge, 7-1 Regal Romper, 10-1 Liaster Soston, Issym, 12-1 Random Assault, 13-1 Eastly Joker 3.15 RACING CHANNEL NOVICE H'CAP HURDLE (CLASS E) 23.650 2m 4f 110yds

FORCE REACH THE CLOUDS (8) (Upcon 5 to 2)

CLE FOR MAIN MAIN (P19) Filancier Tip 3

Deedley

FOR WHAT JIM WANTS (29) (1) Check 4 to 5

FORCE FOR FIDELE (11) (1) Check 4 to 5

FORCE FOR FIDELE (11) (1) Check 4 to 5

FORCE FOR FIDELE (11) (1) Check 4 to 5

FORCE FOR FIDELE (11) (1) Check 4 to 5

FORCE FORCE FOR FIDELE F

Pose Date Main (Fe) Assistance Of the Co. Fraga (Sec. 1) Normal 100 G. Lee (3) Common MOONLIGHT VENTURE (9) 11 Vane 5 100 J. Cellagham U.F.C. MISTY GREY (SA) 3 Legs 6 10 W. Doeling (7) 115 declared -

- 15 dischied - Harting State 9th 13th Philippine Harting State 9th 13th Prinsions Harting State 9th 13th Prinsions Harting State 9th 13th Prinsions Harting State 9th 14th Early Harting State 9th 14th Early Harting State 11th EETTING 1-4 Scotton Green, 9-2 Reach The Clouds, 6-1 Southern Cross, 8-1 Second Fiddle, Primitive Heart, Reining States, 10-1 Larishill, 14-1 Dan De Mar. 16-1 Alise Chiebb, Moonlegit Venture, 20-1 others

F # 30 HILL TRIX (7) (CD) N Bestop (1 10 3

£1,500 added 2m

MUSAHILL (18) 9 Neskitan 6 10 8

COUNT JOE (27) 3 Jeneson 4 R 4

COUNTRYBAN (25) T George (THE OBJECT THE OB

(23) HAVE TO THURK (229) (D) Finchols 9 in 12 L Commins (S) 6 CLG Ain C EXPRESS (294) 7 to 0.5 in 9 J Cullety (3) 22 PRICE'S HELL (352) (CD) K Baley (0 in 5 P Henkly (3)

(61) FORTUNES COURSE (30) (CD) J Kara & 10 13 . W Mark

- 7 declared -EETTING 3-1 Carole's Crusedor, 100-39 Fortunes Course, 5-1 Price's Hill

3.30 WEATHERBYS STARS OF TOMOR-

BRUSH WITH FAME (245) PHOCES 5 (1.4)

LEMESDON MANOR (199) (DI PRVetto 6 n n J R Koroso) SALLYBOLLEN (231) © Books 5 n 2 M Berry (7

POLKERRIS 1 kmg o # 4 J Cullety SILENT ACTION (USA) (643) 5: Soott 5 H 4 M Sharrate

Have To Think \$-1 A N C Express, 7-1 Sir Leonard, 10-1 Hill Trix

Progessive Mulligan to make all the running

The former National Hunt jockey Steve Smith Eccles (right) gives a runner-by runner analysis of today's Tingle Creek Chase at Sandown



ASK TOM: Pulled up in the OH SO RISKY: As his name Haldon Gold Cup on his sea- suggests, a wager on this geldsonal reappearance at Exeter ported to have had a viral infection, he is best watched.

CELIBATE: Started the campaign with a win at Kempton but has fizzled out. The major players here look too good for him.

KLAIRON DAVIS: Won the Queen Mother Champion Chase in 1996 and tuned up with a minor victory recently. Will take all the beating.

MULLIGAN: Unbeaten until he fell in his last two races as a novice, he was a creditable second to Viking Flagship at Exeter, making the running before tiring at the last. He should strip litter this time and his front-running style will be seen to good

effect on this track.

ing wouldn't be wise. A decent behind Viking Flagship. Re- hurdler on his day but is not up to this task. OR ROYAL: Disappointing be-

hind Simply Dashing at Ascot

but he will be better suited by this two miles. Loves to come off a strong pace and is sure to be involved in the finish. VIKING FLAGSHIP: This

great old horse doesn't know how to run a bad race, as he proved by taking the Haldon Gold Cup at Exercit on his reappearance. He was put in his place by One Man last time but will figure prominently here over his best trip.

Conclusion: Lam convinced that we have still not seen the best of David Nicholson's exciting youngster MULLIGAN.

ot Sports **TOWCESTER**

HYPERION 12.45 Quistaquay 1.20 Ainsi Solt II 1.50 Texan Baby 2.25 Danger Flynn 3.00 Fortunes Course

GOING: Chase - Good to Self: Hurdle - Soft.

Right-hand, undulating chault. Plun-in of 140yd.

Course is on A5 SE of form. Pus service from Northampton station. ADMINISTION: Members C12; Tattersals SB; Course SS. CAR. pater.

PARIC: Free.

© LEADING TRAINERS: D Michalson 27-67 (403%), K Balley 12-53
(226%), T Forsiar 9-76 (103%) Mrs J Poman 5-36 (222%)
© LEADING JOCKEYS: W Manaton 10-81 (22%), R Guest 6-39 (5-4%),
D Byms 4-19 (211%), B Powall 4-66 (51%)
© FAVORITES: 128-454 (222%)
ELBNicered First Tible: None.

12.45 EBF STOKE PARK NATIONAL HUNT NOVICE HURDLE (QUALIFIER) (CLASS D) £3,550 added 2m 5f

(CEASO I) E3,000 RODGO 211 of 150 MEN ESER (10) E3,000 RODGO 2 II Soldstein (7) 150 MEN ESER (10) E BILLON (86) C Books 6 V 2 M Berry (7) 1522 M THE BLOOD (12) P NILDS 6 V 2 M Berry (7) 1522 M THE BLOOD (12) P NILDS 6 V 2 M Berry (7) 1522 M THE BLOOD (12) P NILDS 6 V 2 M BERRY (13) P NILDS 15 V 2 D Leahy 15 MALESTIC AFFRIG (24) M HENDESON 5 V 2 P Menley (3) 48.022 SMYNEOD PRICE (14) J Heliterton 5 V 2 D Syme 0.0 BARTON 18 (37) S BROOKEN 5 V 7 S Wynne U MLIAE (10) Mr P Robeson 5 V 7 S Wynne U MLIAE (10) Mr P Robeson 5 V 7 C Webb (5) orting-life con

P. PSEMALE (229) S Brookstaw 6 to 7 Mass H Brookstaw [7]

50. WINNETKA GAL (369) N Twister-Danes 5 to 7. W Marston
— 12 declared —

BETTING: 2-1 Quistinguay, 4-1 in The Blood, 5-1 Jet Files, Swynford Flyet, 11-2 Majestic Affair, 20-1 Lucrative Park, 25-1 Ban Eiger, Winnekta Gel.

Cross The Rubicon, 33-1 others

CONNETTION A. LOCKEYS.

1.20 PURY END CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS G) 52,375 added 2m Penalty Value £1,895

added 2m Penalty Value £1,895

1 IZS-PO SPRINTEAVRE (31) (CD) Libra 9 in to ... G. Galagher (7) PS-PPZ AMRS SOIT IL (FFR (5) G. McCarl 8 in 9 ... Gary Levis 8 3 20724 MAISS-MIR (22) P Winterenth 5 in 7 ... X Argum 1 40F-05 MAITED FRONT (8) J Nevide 5 in 9 ... X Argum 1 To ascombe 1 Cummabs 6 00-45 NOBGHTSRINGE GROUP (10) MAISS-MIR 5 in 10 Cummabs 6 00-45 NOBGHTSRINGE GROUP (10) MAISS-MIR 5 in 10 Cummabs 6 00-45 NOBGHTSRINGE GROUP (10) MAISS-MIR 5 in 10 Cummabs 6 00-45 NOBGHTSRINGE (10) MAISS-MIR 6 in 10 MAISS-M

7/d 92' 1/b.
BETTING: 7-2 Ainsi Solt II, 4-1 Museum, 9-2 Memory's Music, 6-1 Knights-bridge GH, Sprintfayre, 10-1 Be Brave. 12-1 Cambo. Blaze Of Song. 16-1 United Front, Mega Tid

TOTE NOVICE CHASE (Qualifer) (CLASS D) 25,000 added 2m 6f BOUL BANK AMBRIE (50) M PETRATE TO 2015-2 HEINTY COME (24) ASS Y MARINS 9 TO 10 PETRATE TO 10 PETRAT

39-3 | SPANISH RIVER (23) IN LUMPS (25) | A Bates (5) (30) | TEXAN BABY (20) (0) K Treston Devel 3 in C J Goldstein (7) (25) | THE MEDICANS GONE (10) (0) (0) Seagrey 3 in C V Sattery (25) | COUNTRY STORE (10) (0) 4 P Jones 5 in C | Guide (45) (45) | Georgia 4 P Seagrey 3 in C V Sattery (25) | FORTYTWO DEE (11) K Seaton 1 (0) | M Shamati

BETTING, 7-4 Henry Cone. 11-4 Fezan Baby, 3-1 Lottery Ticke; 10-1 Rata-zone Beau. 16-1 Bank Avenue. 20-1 Country Store, Mitchells Best, 25-1 Fortytvo Dee The Medicans Conc. 33-1 Spanish River 2.25 SYLVIA MARSHALL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) 52.925 added 3m 1120 GRUNGE (302) (CD) I Marry Strong and

| 1006 | GRUNSE (002) (CD) | Liverby Strat, 9 to 10 | C Uplen 2 1000 | E HTERAL (USA) (GO (10 - Mo) 5 to 5 | C Uplen 3 1000 |

Agreement Acquestion of the Agreement of the Agreement Porcey (Agreement Porcey) (Agreeme 3.00 N L M HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C)

CRAZY CRUSADER S. Sarvath 5 10 G. G. Upton
SHARP AUCE (215) An obligatoritie 10 G. Guy Lewis (3) BETTING 4-6 Mush hill 13-2 Brush vitin Farne, 7-1 Broganier, 10-1 Belly-beden Lewesdon Manor 14-1 Countyman, 15-1 Cleary Grusanter, Silent Action Father (*CCarten, Demi Century, 20-1 Ertin Alley, Politerris, 25-1

6

R Mossey (3



ROWBOTTOM

ON THE PERILS OF REPORTING ATHLETICS

I woke up and my trousers were around my ankles. Whatever it was, it wasn't good. I was in a place that was brightly lit and dimly familiar. My hotel room? Did I get a taxi, then?

No, not my hotel room. A toilet. A toilet in a restaurant. A toilet in a Basque restaurant. In... Spain.

I looked at my watch - how could it be 10 to 5? Because that would mean... that surely would mean I had... where were the others?

Hitching up my crumpled trousers, I unlocked the door good sign that, must have locked the door, you should lock the door - and stepped out. Unlike the restaurant I had visited the previous evening, this was a very quiet, dark place, not at all popular. So unpopular, indeed, that I was the only one in it, although I was not entirely alone.

by the eerie glow of the drinks cabinets, hung huge hams. These Basques. I thought, they do love their meat.

I hadn't noticed the hams on my way in. Then again, I hadn't noticed anything for five hours.

Drink, I reflected, might have played its part in my situation. Some drink had undoubtedly been drunk - a sock, brown with a silly pattern, couple of beers, no more. Big ones, though. And just that one glass of red wine. Or so. But, in the evidence for the defence. the prime exhibit was surely Long Day in Hot Sun.

Madrid's Estadio de la Comunidad had turned out to be entirely open to the elements - the relevant one being fire. An hour into our early start to the day's European Cup athletics, the sun had heated us to about gas mark 6. The guys from L'Equipe had stripped

the shirts were back on with the

Something was nagging at me... the French, always so stylish, you didn't catch them wearing ankle socks with their shorts... Nagging... sports socks, maybe, but they looked OK somehow, meant, not like

the typical Englishman abroad

worn half-way up a weedy

white calf ... At me. The bill? have paid it. I couldn't even remember what I'd eaten. Oh yes could.

Momentarily I turned back to the cubicle I had vacated as the thought of what could fairly be termed Exhibit B for the defence - plate of odd meat regurgitated itself. But that wasn't it. Not the bill. Not the odd meat. What?

side was the courtyard where I had sat with a large tableful of my fellow toilers before that rising feeling – unmistakeable as grief - had drawn me discreetly and swiftly away from

the jocund throng.

I wanted nothing more now than to slide between the cool sheets of my hotel bed. My hand was on the door handle. Maybe it was a door which simply locked itself as it was swung shut. Or something like that. Cool sheets, fizzy mineral water. I turned the handle.

To no effect, as far as getting out was concerned. But to considerable effect as far as filling the restaurant with a noise that resembled an LA cop carat the scene of crime was concerned. After about five minutes, the noise was replaced by phone behind the bar rang.

All around the bar, lit only down to the waist, but by noon restaurant door. On the other And as I had no other pressing business, I answered it.

I couldn't understand what the man was saying - and he couldn't understand what I was saving. The Spanish phrase for: "I'm sorry, I'm an English journalist and I have fallen asleep in your toilet" cluded me.

It was as I put the phone down that the nagging feeling suddenly turned itself into something more tangible. It wasn't nagging any more, it was shouting in my face. Policemen in Spain carry guns! Guns! I thought: How can I make

it very clear - crystal clear, as my old headmaster would have said - that I am not a burglar? Sit by the bar, casually, as if

you have fallen asleep there. But they won't be able to see your hands. How will they know you don't have a gun or a deafening silence. Then the a knife? Simply stand in the middle of the room with your

arms in the air. I tried this. It was just too absurd. And of course, I thought, it might make them think you've done something criminal and were owning up, whereas the image you need to foster at this point in your life is "poor, sleepyheaded Englishman."

Torch beams swung across the windows. I heard the sound of voices. Now the doors were opening, and two very large, uniformed policemen were moving towards me with guns.

My plans were as nothing. Instinctively, I embraced the international language of helplessness - palms together as if in prayer at the side of my tilted face. Then palms outstretched beseechingly.

For a moment the two big men looked at me with incomprehension. Then one glanced at the other and

By now, a rumpled man I took to be the restaurant owner - and perhaps also the owner of the voice on the phone had joined the party, a jacker over his pyjama top. As they spoke to him, he stared at me with an expression I find hard to describe.

So what was it to be? The policemen were taking me outside now. Oh, cool sheets and mineral water...

Assume the best, I thought. Hotel Cuzco?" I asked, And one of them pointed his finger in the right direction, sending a poor, sleepy-headed Englishman - Yesss! - off into the streetlit night.

The foregoing, obviously, is by way of a personal plea to all designers of sporting stadiums. Designers, please, go that extra mile and cover all the stands. Otherwise it will only lead to trouble...

Brilliant Hollioake leads from front

Mark Baldwin reports from Lahore England 264-9 Pakistan A 229 England win by 35 runs

Adam Hollioake led from the front, scoring 86 and taking 2 for 38 as England heat Pakistan A by 35 runs in Lahore yesterday.

Hollioake's brilliant innings from 99 balls was the centrepiece of England's 50-over total of 264 for 9. He then took two important wickets with his medium pace to stamp his authority on his new position as England's one-day captain.

Graeme Hick also impressed with 50. Matthew Fleming made an invaluable 29 not out at the end, and the War-

Marvan Atapattu hit a defiant

98 yesterday to steer Sri Lanka

towards safety in the third and

final Test against India in Bom-

India's mammoth first-innings

score of 512, ended the third day

on 286 for 5, needing only 27

more runs to avoid the follow-

on. Ataoattu, who hit a centu-

rv in the first Test, missed a

second one by two runs when he

pushed a ball from the off-spin-

ner Rajesh Chauhan into the

watchman. Kumara Dharma-

sena, who resumed at the

overnight score of 66 for 1, had

thwarted India's bid to snatch

Atapattu and the night-

hands of silly point.

The Sri Lankans, replying to

bay yesterday.

new-hall wickets in an eventual analysis of 4 for 58.

Ealham also contributed good

The Pakistani side were led by the former Hampshire fast bowler, Aqib Javed, who failed to take a wicket in his eight overs. Yesterday's game was the first of two matches against Pakistan A which have been organised to provide match practise before the four-nation Champions' Trophy tournament, which starts in Sharjah next week.

Meanwhile, England's chairman of selectors, David Graveney, said yesterday that the first-class counties' refusal to wickshire all-rounder Dougie give him total control of in-

Brown included two important ternational players was "not a

Graveney, who is here in England's one-day squad, was

> Graveney said: "I can see the arguments for making it official for the selectors to be able to withdraw players from county games if they feel they need a

"But I don't see this as a major issue as long as the counties appreciate that sometimes players do need time off - and that we have a very busy international schedule over the next 18

"Last summer we had a gentleman's agreement that any requests from us would be considered sympathetically, and as far as I am concerned it worked well. I certainly didn't

"I think it's important at the

Then, though, Aravinda De Silva (48no), the scourge of Indian bowlers over the last year. saw out the day in company with Hashan Tillakaratne, who was unbeaten on four.

Therd day, Sri Lanka won toss INDIA - First Innings 512 (S C Ganguly 173. S R Tendukan 148, R S Drawd 93).

the initiative with a 115-run stand for the second wicket. The pair batted through the morning session, before Dhar-

India 512; Sri Lanka 286-5 also off Chauhan. Sri Lanka then reached 219 for 2 before India struck three times late in the day as the wicket showed signs of wear and tear.

> Roshan Mahanama was caught at gully off the scamer Venkatesh Prasad for 20, before Chauhan removed Atapattu and the captain, Arjuna Ranatunga, in quick succession.

masena was dismissed after lunch for 40, caught at mid-on

big issue."

Dean Headley and Mark Pakistan as the manager of bowling stints and Pakistan A reacting to the 10-8 first-class fowere eventually dismissed for rum vote against the proposal at Lord's on Thursday. 229 in the 49th over.

have any refusals.

India make late progress after moment to stress that there is are more concerned with how ternational match is impor-

Pakistan A won toss **ENGLAND** EMGLAND
A D Brown c Shahid Nazir b Nacem 31
1A J Stewart c Shahid Nazir b Nacem 22
B C Hollicelke c Shahid Nazir b Fazile 60 D R Brown run out Falt: 1-49, 2-65, 3-65, 4-65, 5-170, 6-172, 7-196, 8-234, 9-262.

Bowling: Shahid Nazir 8-0-52-0; Agib Javed 8-1-45-0; Nasem Ashraf 6-0-31-2: Fazis Ak-bar 8-0-40-4; Arshad Khan 10-1-39-0; Shahid Afridi 10-0-48-2. PARUSTAN A
Shahid Ahrid Ibw b D Brown

Aframmad Rahizan Ibw b D Brown

Aframmad Rahizan Ibw b D Brown

16
Bebar Zantan c & b Gâles

55
Akhitar Sarihaz c Thorpe b Ealham

69
Yousaf You'hara st Stewart b Holifoake

38
Nasem Ashraf not out

48
Shahid Nazr b Ealham

66
Ashad Khan c & b D Brown

66
Fazi-I-Akbar c Stewart b Headley

1
Extras (b2, b3, w3, rb)

9
Total (48,1 overs)

229 PAKISTAN A

Fail: 1-24, 2-40, 3-73, 4-137, 5-157, 6-178, 7-204, 8-219, 9-228 Bowling: Headley 91-0-29-1: D Brown 10-1-58-4; Fleming 5-1-22-0: Giles 6-0-30-1: Eal-ham 10-0-47-2; Hollicake 8-0-38-2.



England perform, and every in- Adam Hollioake, the England captain, on his way to 86 in Lahore yesterday

Lara decision sparks reaction Malcolm's move is 'big wrench'

Not long ago Brian Lara was the record-breaking batsman whose signing by a county side would have been greeted with a firework display. The reception he gets nowadays still generates a lot of heat, but it is more in the

way of smouldering resentment. A section of the 15,000 Warwickshire membership have reacted to Lara's appointment as captain with a petition questioning the way the West Indies batsman appeared to be rushed into the job as replacement for Tim Munton, last year's injury-

troubled captain. The petition organisers are unimpressed with Lara's limited record as a captain and are concerned that "disagreements within the West Indies side could spread into Warwickshire's dressing-room".

"We had no problem with Brian when he was here in 1994 and it was a ununimous decision - involving many former players - to make him captain." Dennis Amiss, the club's chief

executive, said. 'We debated the matter nature. long and hard once it was deeided there were too many uncertainties about Tim Munton's match fitness for next season.

We talked about Nick Knight and Neil Smith, but decided that if Brian were to be captain he would be even more focused and committed."

Warwickshire appear to be unusually anxious about heading off a rebellion. Amiss cancelled a prior engagement on Thursday to answer questions at a routine social gathering at Edgbaston.

Devon Malcolm's desire to win a big wrench, "I have had a great back his England place has time at Derbyshire for 14 years taken him to Northampton- and Derbyshire people have shire, the 34-year-old paceman shown me a lot of affection, but having neatly taken the middle you have to move on and I stump out of Worcestershire's late, but forceful bid for his sig-

Malcolm, who became a free agent on I November af-

three-year deal. "To make such a decision there are a hell of lot of things to be taken into consideration, such as my family," he said. "I have given it a lot of thought and I have decided to move to give Lillee 10 years ago." me the extra motivation so I can win by England place back."

he made his debut in 1984, was tralia.

thought this was the best time to do it," he said.

Steve Coverdale, Northamptonshire's chief executive, said: "He is perhaps the most poputer rejecting Derbyshire's offer lar player in English cricket and of a new contract, has signed a is much admired as a cricketer and personality throughout the world. There has been enormous interest locally since it became known that we were in for him - it compares to that generated when we signed Dennis

Malcolm will team up with his former Derbyshire team-The fast bowler admitted mate Paul Taylor and overseas that leaving Derbyshire, where signing Paul Reiffel from Aus-

THE INTERNET

SPORT ON

Reggae Boyz of Jamaica call the tune

So now we know the draw and what England and Scotland have to do

to qualify for the last 16. According to the world rankings on the official website of Fifa, world football's governing body, England are in the toughest group. England are ranked at 6, up from 12 at the beginning of the year, but Romania are 5, Colombia 9 and even Tunisia are 23. Scotland are out at 36, behind all three of their group. Brazil (1), Norway (14)

and Morocco (16). The site also contains such gems about the official match ball, which "features a newly engineered hi-tech foam layer, which improves on the high compression rapid responce [sic] polyurethane". It is also "softer and faster than its predecessor". Well I'm

zlad i know that. Perhaps I tried the site on a busy day, but there were problems getting through to various other sections. It does have the feel of an official site with the conservatism one might expect.

A plethora of more interesting unofficial sites is bound to spring up. The unofficial World Cup site is a little more lively and has all the qualifying results, history plus videos of great goals from World Curs from 1930.

One of the more interesting associated World Cup sites is Reggaeboyz, the unofficial site of Jamaica. There is great debate going on whether their Englishhorn, but Jamaica-qualified players should be added to the squad. You can add your vote.

The official England site is disappointing. You would be hard pressed to know that there was a World Cup next year, let alone with England playing in it. The Jamaica site puts it to shame.

For a good World Cup archive and statistics site you could do much worse than the International Football Archive, which includes a full World Cup section.

You have to be selective in your web searches. Entering "Fifa" gives you a drum and bass group of that name led by Digital Bob. - Edward Abelson

ADDRESSES

Official Fita site Omicial Fifs site
http://www.regresboyz.com web Site

up://www.pgpsaboyz.con
England's Official site
http://www.greenlag.co.uk/la/
index.html
htternasia tional/World Cup Archive http://www.rdasike. demon.co.uk/looksi/

Unreal and surreal meet in the acid-hued world of the cavorting cockerel "Unreal," Barry Davies by singing the diabolically said as Scotland found awful France 98 anthem. Via clip-sequences they love so Carole Rousseau (I don't tained the Rest of the ers were enlisted to help and MC Blatter zipped much (and generally do so



CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV themselves in Brazil's group yet again in the World Cup Draw (Eurosport, BBC2, ITV). But he might have been talking about the whole damn show, which was enacted on a stage set constructed taste or lots of good acid. A mad riot of blue, I think it was probably the same set used for this year's Eurovision Song Contest (which I only saw because, er, I was tied to a chair with my eyelids held open like Malcolm McDowell in A Clockwork

The BBC wisely steered clear of the music at the beginning of the show, while Eurosport gave us Youssou n'Dour and a French chanters: who seemed to be called Axle Red (one of Dulux's new range, apparent-

Eurosport's lousy sound it came across like an emas-Graceland. Pele lookalike N'Dour, though, is a genuine star - despite his jacket, which was clearly modelled on that comeaby someone with either no abrasing blue-and-whiteflecked number that Manchester United wore as their 13th away strip a few years ago (for Coca-Cola was an R in the month. I seem to remember).

> joined by a bunch of kids dressed in an overblown parody of street style, dancing with those jerky mannerisms so beloved of Janet or Michael Jackson (I can never tell which one

is which these days). The Beeb kicked off in-

well), all the most famous World Cup moments over culated Paul Simon circa some rather cheap disco nonsense (whoever selects their music, which is usually done brilliantly, let themselves down on this occasion). Then after accounts of how England and Scotland made it this far, it was on to the Old Dependables in the studio, where Jimmy Hill pronounced Cup second legs when there himself "frightened already" and wondered where Paraguay was. The He and Mile Red were ever-prescient Alan Hansen picked Romania as

the seed to be seen with. In Marseilles, Davies was his usual slightly donnish self, wearing his erudition like an old, comfy cardigan. On stage, the show was being presented by a couple of TF1 pre-

know if she was born free. but she wasn't in chains). Eurosport's Archie Me-Pherson (who has written on Scottish football for this paper) was doing a perfectly good job, but it's difficult to match Bazza's languidly clegant way with words.

Sepp Blatter was running the show, complete with one of those microphone headsets also popularised by Janet Jackson to a fair number of whistles from the crowd (everyone who set foot on stage to help with the draw also had them, which seemed a little superfluous as no one except Blatter and the TF1 couple spoke.

Brazil, naturally, were first out of the hat - or flashy salad bowl, in fact - and Ronaldo was brought on. fresh from the exhibition as Darren Jackson). stead with one of those senters. Roger Zabel and game, in which he'd cap-

World (he must have had to burry, though he didn't have much in the way of hair to dry). As each team was drawn, a player from that country was led on by one of a team of hostesses, to sit by the side of the stage like guests on This Is Your Life and do little else (nothing else, in fact). It was interesting that out of the 32 two did not look like refugees from an Armani fashion

shoot - Paul Ince and Gordon Durie, who were wearing those big football coats, no doubt to fulfil some sponsorship deal (if my cars didn't deceive me, by the way, the Scot, who had been billed for the afternoon's game as lan Durie, suffered further nomenclaturial indignity when he was ushered on to the stage

Famous former play-

my hero from the 1982 World Cup. Marius Tresor, who had the air of an enlightened African head of bowl was manned, the show resembled the set of the Fifteen To One quiz show, which I was once forced to watch one afternoon in a similar manner to the Eurovision.

In stark contrast to the dignified bearing of Tresor and the other elder luminaries were the anties of Footix, the infernally irritating mascot, which I guess is supposed to resemble the Gallie cockerel. The creature pranced around the stage for no apparent reason - all crickerel and bull if you ask me.

Once the draw was unnately, few interruptions, really,

with the draw, including through it all with a thoroughly professional air. There was a cutaway of Glenn Hoddle hoking suitably smug when Engstate. Once each salad land were given a fairly easy ride, though Craig Brown looked a little taken aback. Back in the studio

(once again the BBC wisely avoided the music, a kind of salsa without the spice), Jimmy Hill was playing Nostradamus, You can look at five of the groups and I can pick the results now," he said. I wish they d held him to that. When it comes to the

Scots, he was probably right. You can see it now: gallant defeat to Brazil. goalless draw against Norway, apocalpytic pratfall against Morocco. They derway, there were, fortu-needn't bother going,

Randell at hub of Hart's philosophy

Where on earth do they find them? The All Blacks' anguish at the loss of the great Zinzan Brooke from their illustrious back row has been softened by the emergence of another Maori maestro blessed with the full range of talents plus a few extra. Chris Hewett lifts the lid on Taine Randell, a New Zealand captain in waiting.

So who is the player of this extraordinary New Zealand tour, the noir de la noir of the 1997 All Blacks? Christian Cullen, perhaps? It seems churlish not to bestow the accolade on the world's only untackleable fullback. How about Jonah Lomu. who now defies medical science as well as opposition defences, or Robin Brooke, whose skill at organising four-on-three overlaps contrasts sharply with the to organise anything more complicated than a knees-up in a

not quite worthy enough. The stand-out player on the current record-breaking rampage through England and Wales is blind-side flanker from Otago Zealand rugby lore - Peter Jones, Kel Tremain, Ian Kirkpatrick, Mark Shaw, Alan Whetton and Michael Jones are among the luminaries of the past - have earned him a foothold in the grandest of grand traditions. His stock is now remarkably high: no one seriously doubts that he will lead the All Blacks into the 1999 World Cup, always assuming that the ailing Sean Fitzpatrick does not manufacture a Second

Coming. things said and written back time" - but the man-boy had It s simply not an issue as far as — expected advancement, I'm concerned," insisted Ran-

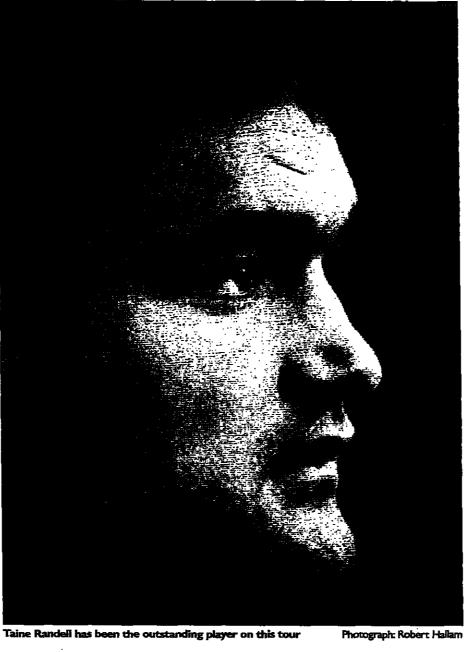
herent modesty inspires an expression of embarrassed horror when it is suggested that he might fill the chasm at No 8 left by Zinzan Brooke, who retires from representative rugby at Twickenham this afternoon. "Oh God, please don't put me in that bracket," he pleads.

Yet Randell is that good. His performance in overshadowing the brilliance of Cullen, Jeff Wilson and the rest during the 80-point jamboree against Llanelli at Stradey Park a month ago had John Hart, the All Black coach, singing his praises from the West Wales moltops - "Jeez, did you see Randell out there?" he beamed - and was all the more impressive for the fact that he had spent the previous seven weeks on the treatment table. After four weeks of careful reflection, Hart was equally fulsome when he returned to the subject in London on Thursday,

"I sometimes sit down with

Zinzan and say: 'Let's talk about Taine, let's compare the two of you at 23. And Zinny is always quick to admit that Taine inability of British second rows is much, much further along the road in terms of development. What we have here is a young man who made the All Black Worthy candidates all, but team and captained Otago at both provincial and Super 12 level while completing a double degree in law and commerce. He passed with honours, too, Taine Randell, the quietly in- and that tells me something dustrious but hugely effective about his quality. If I have to criticise him, I'd say he needs to whose performances in one of get in the gym and work on his powerhouse positions of New strength. But he has all the talents and the maturity to maximise them. He's a natural role model.

At 21 years and 275 days, Randell became the second youngest All Black captain in history when he led the midweek "dirty dirties" during the triumphant 1996 tour of South Africa. Hart now believes he was guilty of gilding the lily in fast-tracking his protegé with such velocity - "he coped pretty well, but it was a burden he could have done without given "There have been a few all the other demands on his home about the captaincy, but long been used to early and un-



planation for his startling precocity. "It's funny, actually. I first played rugby at a hometown club where the lower age limit was five. I was four at the time." A law-breaker, eh? If the police had been alerted there and then, England might have heen spared the clinical try he scored against them at Old Trafford a fortnight ago.

Having watched from the bench as his beloved Otago unveiled a prototype All Black game plan against a bewildered Lions side as far back as 1993, Randell is now a key component of a Test back row at the hub of Hart's new-age rugby philosophy. Typically, he makes no grandiose claims on behalf of himself or the team. "There is." he emphasises, "no great mystery to what we do out there on

He made his provincial de- basic skills of the game are but there was a different sort of dell this week. "My sole aim is but at 17, spent three seasons handed down from generation enjoyment to be derived from to retain my place in the Test with the New Zealand Colts to generation - rugby runs in the being up against the wall, from side and when you look at the rather than the usual one and blood in New Zealand, it's in the being taken to the limit. It's then quality of the other gays in the captained them while still a full soil - but there is a bottom line that you look at yourself in the squad who have the same thing year short of optimum age. "It to all this and it's simply that we shaving mirror and your eyes in mind, it is a tough enough cull just seems to be the way of have some very good players in stare back at you, straight and to be going on with." His in- things with me," said Randell, our team at the moment. The true. Incredibly satisfying."

unable to offer the remotest ex- faster and wider you play the game, the greater the demands on your skills. If you can't play football under pressure, the

whole things falls flat on its face. "Take Zinny, for example. He is capable of anything, absolutely anything, but when you play alongside him you know he will perform the basics as a first priority, that he will take the ball up properly and make his tackles. There is no place to hide on the Test paddock, not with these guys around you.

"lt doesn't always go to plan.

We very nearly went down to South Africa in Johannesburg a few months back; we'd stayed in Sun City, the temperature was off the scale and when we ran out at Ellis Park, we were already jaded. The Boks sensed that and ran in a couple of early tries and we had to dig very deep to get out of there with a "I suppose we instinctively fit win. Now I'd much prefer it if in with each other because the - we blitzed overvicem we played

land by record margins, the Mallett-driven Springboks seem destined to conclude their European tour by administering the biggest hammering of the lot.

It was the South Africa

XV of 1951 who inflicted

the heaviest defeat on

Jim Telfer, the Scottish Rugby Union's director of playing operations, has suggested it would take "a miracle" to bring about a victory that, in his estimation, would rank as "Scotland's greatest rugby achievement." And The Scotsman, while pondering the possible selection permutations, pointed out that the one most likely to succeed, "playing all 26 squad members at once, is apparently in contravention of

the laws". Such defeatist talk is not the canny Caledonian kidology it and Chris Rea performed the might once have been. The ghosts of pre-Christmas games set up Ian Smith for the clinchpast are threatening to haunt

Scottish rugby today. The nightmare 37-8 defeat inflicted by a less than accom-And today? What about plished Australia is still fresh in England? "I think it will be difthe memory - a performance, ferent to last year, when I more faint-heart than Braveplayed at Twickenham with the heart, which had the punters New Zealand Barbarians. We pouring out towards Princes wanted to win that one, of Street long before the merciful blast of the final whistle. The course, but it wasn't a Test. The game came at the end of a long home challenge today will be to season and the pressure was off. mend broken hearts and avoid A Test is something else, befurther record-breaking damage cause the silver fern is sacred on the scoreboard. and we all feel the responsibil-

South Africa may have crossed the equator without Joost van der Westhuizen and Andre Joubert, twin-orchestrators of their 34-15 win at Murrayfield three years ago, and this week been deprived of Henry Honiball, but the relentless progress they have

ity we owe to the shirt. This will

suring. For anyone who has

managed to erase last season's

scoreline from their memory, it

finished like this: England 19,

New Zealand Baa-Baas 34.

Thanks, Taine. Very reas-

be serious."

their Hertfordshire-born coach, Nick Mallett, suggests they are capable of emulating the All Blacks of 1993 by becoming the

rout at hands of Springboks

Scotland fear cricket score

Scotland, However, Simon second team to put a half-cen-Tumbull has a strong tury of points past Scotland. feeling that the record Anything less than that books will be revised by the Boks of '97 in Edinburgh today. Scotland, it would appear, do not have the ghost of a chance

would represent a qualified success in damage limitation for the Scots, who welcome back their captain, Rob Wainwright, at blind-side flanker, but who have been denied the totemic presence at inside centre of Alan at Murrayfield this afternoon. Tait, scorer of the clinching uy in the Lions' first Test victory Having nailed France and Engagainst South Africa at Newlands in June. With Doddie Weir and Tom Smith also Lions still licking wounds, Scotland would seem to be in danger of

losing by a record margin too. That particular humiliation was inflicted not in the 51-15 defeat against New Zealand four years ago, but by South Africa in November 1951. Ten of the Springbok XV got their names on the Murrayfield scoresheet in that 44-0 rout - among them Aaron "Okey" Geffin, the placekicking Transvaal prop who landed seven of his nine conversion attempts.

Scotland have not beaten the Springboks since Ian Robertson dummy scissors move which ing try in a 6-3 victory at Mur-

made under the direction of rayfield on 6 December, 1969. The captain that day, one JW Telfer of Melrose, will not be expecting a victorious 28th anniversary present, but the SRU's director of rugby will be hoping for a vast improvement on the showing that left him "embarrassed and ashamed"

at Murrayfield a fortnight ago. Mallett, publicly at least, claims to be wary of a potential backlash. "I hate coming in against a side like Scotland, who are coming off a bad defeat and

being written off," he said. In his days as a padded-up Oxford Blue, Mallett once came in against Ian Botham - and struck him for three sixes in one over. The fear of Scotland is that South Africa's coach could be chasing a cricket score again this

Cardiff and the Welsh Rugby Union are poised to settle their differences and finalise a 10-year loyalty agreement next week. The Arms Park club are the only side from the eightstrong Welsh Premier Division not to have signed a formal contract with the WRU. Once they come to an arrangement they will be paid around £220,000 in

back payments from the union. Cardiff have refused to have television cameras at their ground for league matches, putting the WRU's contract with S4C and HTV at risk.

SCOTLAND v SC	DUTH AFRICA
	0.11
at Murray	TIER
R ShepherdMetrose I5	
C JoinerLeicester 14	J SmallW Province
A StangerHawid: 13	A SnymanN Transvaal
C ChairnersMelrose 12	
D StarkGasgow II	P Rossouw
G TownsendNorthampton 10	
A NicolBath 9	W SwanepoelFree State
D Hilton Bath 1	O du RandtFree State
G BullochW of Scotland 2	J DaltonGauteng
M Stewart Northampton 3	A GarveyNatal
S CampbellDundee HSFP 4	
5 MurrayBedford 5	
R WainwrightWats, capt 6	
E PetersBath 8	G TeichmannNatal, capt
I SmithMoseley 7	A VenterFree State
Replacements: K Logan (Wasps); D Hodge (Wassonians); G Armstrong	Replacements: J Swart (Western Province): D Van Zyl (Moumaking Pures):

Referee: P Thomas (France) Kick-off: 3.0 (BBC 1)

WEEKEND FIXTURE GUIDE

Football

Abon v Herrogato Town Worksop Town v Congleton Town
phil MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division (Returns not on pools coupans): Brownsy to Movers v Atherating Und, Burton Abon v Pro-ett Green Revers, Grawley Koen v Morocale City, Hebrowert Koms v Darrosses, St Lorrans Stamoort v Glenoester Cry Termoort v Hazings Term Middend Olivesom Bederoth Und Pedelch Und, Batten Town v Beechen Und, Bracker Loren v Hordey, Una Corby Koan v Sulton Goldfield Tawn Moot Green v Bakendt Rom v Green Worked i Schlau Benauft, Rom v Hordey una Corp Grant Romer (Schar Moot Green v Bakendt Rom v Green Kanner Town v Romer (Schar Romer) Constituent George (Schar Romer) Chemistra Romer (Schar Romer) Chemistra (Schar Romer) Chem terbury Cay, Statio Green v Cooperna.

INNAUET SISSEM COUNTY LEAGUE First Di-vision, Anuncia v Haldman Itour Chuhrusiar City
- Eschburne Icom Hescocks « Payman Litho-hampaor Tusar v Whitehara — Payachtusen S.
- Februrter y Portfield, Padall y Shorthan, Fing-mer v Milo Cak, Statioen Lidd v Burster, R. Fing-mer v Milo Cak, Statioen Lidd v Burster, R. Fing-mer v Milo Cak, Statioen Lidd v Burster, R. Fing-Cup second reunds Languary Sports v Soloty. Cup second reund Languer Sports Codes, IM-LSPORT LIMITED COUNTIES LEAGUE Premier Division: Bourne y Northumpton Spancer, Busangham & Envistue y, Copyarion y Yalley, Ford Sports y Spatiana, Indocadn's Waterplachuch, Lond Bussey, 2004-16, For the vicerpatric Stitector & Bussey to lan vicerpatric Stitector & Bussey to lan vicerpatric Stitector & Bussey in Spanish States (Parallel Seconds of the Spanish States). ton a Marriero, Blackstone
SCHEWFOX DIRECT LEAGUE Promiter Disstone Burnschafe Konna Chand Koon, Budget for
Down v Gold Down, Budget in Paulium Round,
Caffre Konna Mangotsfeel Und Albachtern Town
v Endebott, Kanten Town of Emercy Tectron Town
v Brakefort, Tamsten Town of Promiter Town
Westbury, Und v Koymaham Zoon
WORTHERN COUNTES EAST LEAGUE Promer Division: Carson & Man v Amold Town.

tented v Thockley, Ossert Town v Cssett Albion NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First Division; Alborion Collenics v Rumeiotom Ud, Hasingden v Saiford City, Holer Old Boys v Alborion LP, Rossandale Ud v Micssley, St Holers Sown v Lament League Cup second round: Burscough v Noten, Cassleton Gebreis v Glossop North End Citherne v Vasuriad SM, Carsand Urd v Nouraccie flowtr Richtpron Arhibos, v Chadderton, Marie Road v Blackpool Rours, Martineth Room v Prescot Calder, Statmandale Urd v Warmigton Town.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE. Newton'y v Eastleigh, Totton v Aerophrudines, Grochertweit v Gosport Gerough, Onstahunch v Mindome Town Cowes Sports, Traction Town.

JEWSON SOS ST. Traction Town v Mindome Town Cowers Sports, Traction Town.

JEWSON BASTERN LEAGUE. Premier Divi-

SUBJECT FOR HEAGUE Premier Division: Angly Ballymena, Gontrain y Criseders Lin-heid y Genavon, Dringh y Colonno, Portal-cent y Cultomate First Division: Ballyctore y Carnel, Dealery y Barryor, Dungamon Santo y Neurry, Lame y Lindadly

Rugby League

2.0 universi stated
Sittik CUT CHALLENGE CUP First round:
Erruphton RR v Hull Dockers, Charlesten v
West London; Deerstury Moor v Dublin; Eccles v Festherstone Lone. Elemborsuch v
Crossfields: Farmson'th ROB v Lower, ideal
AS v Hunsler Warners. Leigh Eczt v East
Hut, London Sviblar v Mytton Worners, Mitord v Gueens Milliom v York Acom; Modgreen v Barrow Island: New Earswick v BRC,
Norland v Mest Hotel, Normantian v Folly Lane. Outlon v Loughborsuch: Universily, Owndon v Bodworth, Queensburyv East
Leeds, RedNi v Wilsan St Judich; Share Cross
v Coryton: Scholl v Lindley; Stammigley v NotInngham Teeside v Landes University; WaInfriedd v Westgale Redoubt, West Borning
v Tromtha, Wigsan Rose BR v Mest; Worn
Village V Futham Tiggetters, John Moores University v Eastmoot

HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: K&etty v UCD (730)

Rugby Union England v New Zesland (20) . (8) Turchenham

land v South Altica (30)

8 Derty v Durham (2:30) (at Newens). League Two Lucisesmathies v North Midlands (2:30) (at Stoneygate).

NORTH AND MIDLANDS LEAGUE Threet East Midlands v Stathordsters (2:30) (at Northambaron): Yondone v Northambaron: City (at Lewes): South League Ones Sussex v Eastern Counter (2:3) (at Celey) South League Chee; South League Three Counter (2:30) (at Selectory). South League Three Counter (2:30) (at Selectory). South League Three Hampsters v Surrey (2:5) (at Us Petramouth) South League Tour: Middlesox v Somered (2:30) (at Selectory). South League Three Counter (2:30) (at Selectory). South League Three Middlesox v Somered (2:30) (at Selectory). South League Three Counter (2:30) (at North Midlands Cotte (2:0) (at Texternam). CHELTERHAM AND GLOUCESTER CUP Group At Gloucester v Fyde (2:30): Welsefield v West Hardepool (2:0). Group B: Exert v Leosster (3:0). Ruthertham v London Irah (2:5). Group C: Waterloo V Coventry (2:5). Group D: Richmond v Bedford (10).

JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE One Rugby v Newbury (3:0). Two North: Manchester v Sandal (2:5). WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier (Midlands).

Newbury (30): Two North: Manchester v Sandd (2-5).

WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE Pramier Division: Bridgerd v Swarmen (20): Lands v Elbow Valle (20). Neath v Porthyproid (20), Newport v Cardiff (60). Finat Division: Abertaxon v Newbordge (20), Abertillery v Durwant (20). Bonyman v Blackwood (20): Caraphthy v South Woles Potes (20): Cores (keys v Rumery (20): Wassing v Institut (20). Merting v Usradomry (20): UWC (Cardiff 140) v Porthyproid (20). AB LEAGUE First Division: Blackwood (20). AB LEAGUE First Division: Blackwood (20). Durgamon v Constitution (230). Old Belwedere v Bullymera (230). Second Division: Division: Cardiff (20): Old Welsey (20): Voung Mansier v Contact (230). Second Division: 230: Western (230). Second Division: 230: Second Division: 230: Second Division: 230: Wanders's v Swariers (230). Brown (230: Wanders's v Swariers (230: Second Division: 230: Wassatt (230: Wassatt (230: Wassatt (230: Swariers) (230: Wassatt (230: Wassatt (230: Second Division: 230: Wassatt (230: Wassatt (230: Mansieter (230: Mansieter (230: Mansieter (230: Mansieter) (23

PIOCKEY
MATIONAL LEAGUE Premier: Carnock v Barford Trigers (10); Dorcastin v Beesten (130); OdLoughtonens v Centestury (20); Reading v
Guiddord (20); Southgast v Hourstow (20), forchejon v Sast Grasical (20) (at Reeds Schoo)
WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier:
Cirlon Scotish Life v Trigers (223); Dorcaster
v Slough (1130); Hightown v Surton Coldinold
(1145); Oben Torraquest v Ipswin (20); Read Division: Bradford Swithenbark v Chelmsford
Highesty (120); Loughborough Students v
Brachnett (230); Surderland v Contentury
(1130); Wimbiocton v Leicester (120)

ice hockey BENSON AND HEDGES CUP Final: Caratt Devils v Ayr Scotlett Eagles (70) (at Shelfield

Basketball

BAIDWESER LEAGUE: Dorby Storm v Greiter London Leoparts (7:30). UNI-BALL TROPHY: Romant Lacester Puders v Newcraft: Eagles (7:30). Tharmos valley Tigers v Mathert Rocks (70), ITT LSE Worthing Boars v Converse Crystal Palace (80).

Other sports

BOGING: World Boding Council insurrational super-middlessight list. H Garbern Stheffield, hotely v Patiena (LS), Vacant Commonweethn super-middlessight fills. D Statis (pleasich) v MB Bakor (Sodoup); WISC International super-permanenght litter: P Julings (Herroe, hotely, v H Hohan (Rust) et Wembley Areng).

TENNIS: ATP Senior Rust of Champions set Royal Albert Hall, Landon)

TOMORROW Football

HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF BULLAND Promier Division: Derry City v Cork City (20). **Rugby Union**

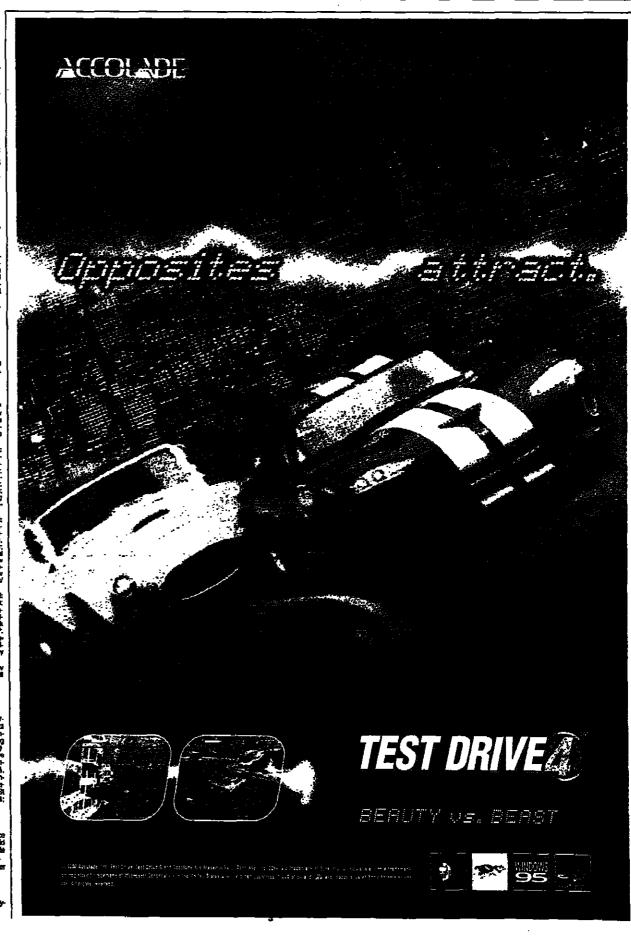
2.0 unless stated
TETLEY'S BITTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP
North and Middends Lasgue Two; Creshes v
Loncesine (2:30, or Sate). South Lasgue
Two: Goucestership v Berkship (2:30, for Lyd-nay) South Lasgue Pour: Devon v Oxfordship
(2:30, or Bernstiple). (23) del Bernstople.
SRU TENNENTS VELIVET CUP Fourth recend:
Abardeen GSFP v Glasgow Hawler, Beccar v Könsensord: East Kitande v Dundee MSFP, Edinearnoth: Hawler v Langholm; Heinder FP v Annen; Jed-Forest v Garmock Kriscaldy v Printy Acasts, Linthopow v Boudghmair, Methose v Grangamouth, Marrayfield v Relson; Musselburgh v Lurier, Peeties v Gart, Sarfing County v Gordoniarro: Strathendrick v Wassonsens; West of Scondon v Gissnow Southern. County v Gordenteric, Strathendrick v Watso-nens: West of Scotland v Gissgow Southern SRU TENNENTS VELVET BOWL Finst research Cornoustan HSFP v Hillicota, Contra CP v Er-nburgh Linv, Cydebarth v Investedt; Ellion v Dun-bar, Hamick Harlequars v Andresson Acade, Kelensburgh w Whitecraps; Highland v Ortresy, isle of Arran v Strathynore; Lassnapte v Royal Hgh, Larron v Carnburgh, North Berwick v Editburgh Nither, Porthalter v Pannture; Porta-botic FP v Ross Holp; St Androws Linv v Strathstern; Stratholyde Linv v Marr; Woystdors/ Drumpelle v Morgan Acad FP SRU TENNENTS VELVET SHELD First round:

PIOCKEY

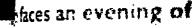
NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier: Beston v Bayford Tigers (20); Concaster v Cannock (20); Eos Grustead v Houndow (230), Guedlord v Cantertury (20), Old Loughtaniers v Residing (20); tattington v Southgrier (230) (et Lensbury) First Offision: Studiers v Harisaston Magpee (20), Bournelle v Goucester City (1230), Brom-ley v Frethands (10); Brodskerds v Surbton (20), Chelmsford v Warnighton (10), Hul v Lough-borough Students (20); Indian Gymhlania v Ha-vanic (20), Loca v Stoutport (120); Loves v St Albars (130), Ovfand Hayles v Ontrol Univ (20).

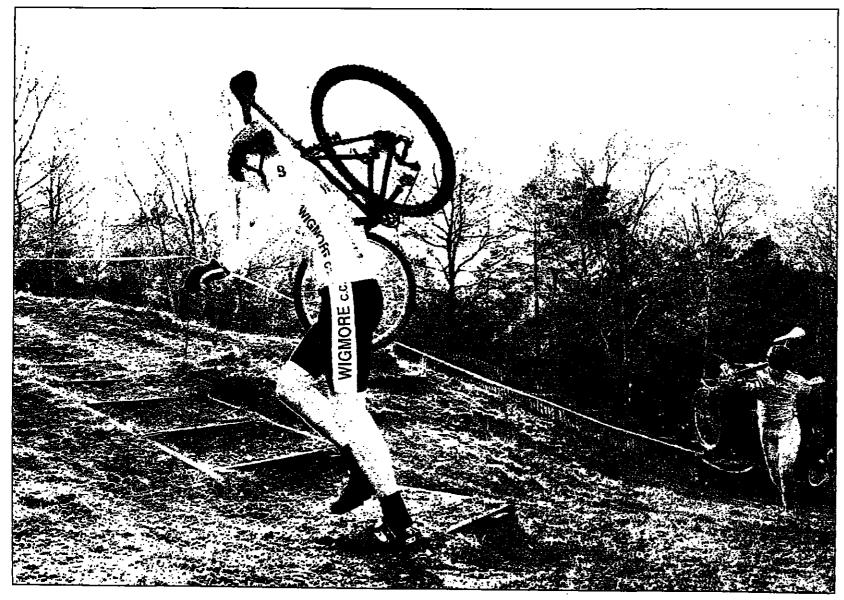
BUDWESER LEAGUE: Converse Dystal Pateo y Feugeot Bullots Einfangham (60), Sheffeld Shand y ITT LEE Worthing Bears (60); Eacle London Towers y Thomas Valley Tugles (63). UNI-BALL TROPHY (Group States & 30

Other sports TENNIS: ATP Sense Tous of Citampions (at Ray-al Albert Hall, London).













champion.

competition featured some 80 riders, including teams from the Netherlands and Belgium.

The course is regarded as one of the toughest in the sport. In the senior event riders had to complete eight laps of a three-kilometre circuit, Craig winning in a time of just over one hour and four minutes. Roger Hammond, the former world junior champion, was third and took the prize as the first London rider home. as the first London rider home.

competition featured some 80

The mad,

muddy

world of

cyclo-cross

weather conditions, as specta-

covered.

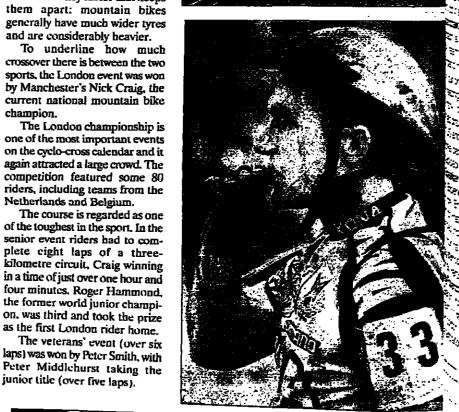
Cyclo-cross riders tackle cross-country courses in which the ter-

rain is often so rough that they have to pick up their bikes and carry them. There are obvious

similarities with mountain bike racing, but in competition terms there is one key factor that keeps

The veterans' event (over six laps) was won by Peter Smith, with Peter Middlehurst taking the junior title (over five laps).









صكذا من الاحل

prospects as a teenager but

last season he was one of six

Wests first-teamers sacked.

future of Keighley will carry

over into the new year after

a court hearing in Leeds to

placed on the Rugby League

by the club, which has been

threatened with expulsion.

The highlight of today's

Silk Cut Challenge Cup ties

is the visit of the first Irish

club to take part, the Dublin

Blues, to Dewsbury Moor.

The Blues qualified by winning an eight-team tour-

- Dave Hadfield

Also in the Teddington

line-up, with an early oppor-

tunity to play their way into

Dancer's squad, will be Nick

Conway, James Wallis, Dan-

ny Havdon and Phil McGuire.

end for Beeston, the Premier

newcomers who take on fel-

low-strugglers Doneaster this

afternoon and Barford Tigers

months to get to grips with the

rather rarefied atmosphere of

the Premier." Graham Grif-

fiths, the Beeston manager.

said. "We are privileged to be

in such an exclusive club and

"It's taken us a few

tomorrow.

Olympic captain, who has re- we intend to keep our mem-

Amaechi debut on hold

It is an important week-

of the Irish border.

was deferred.

The uncertainty over the

RUGBY LEAGUE

Super League newcomers

Huddersfield have made their

first major signing for next

season with the acquisition of

for a bargain £50,000.

Danny Arnold from St Helens

Arnold is a winger of

at 20, represents an impressive

parchase. It is also further evi-

dence of the disintegration of the Saints side that won the

first Super League title in 1996

and the Challenge Cup for the

made a significant signing.

with the news that the West-

em Suburbs stand-off, Adam

next year. Doyle, aged 22, was

rated one of Australia's best

Barry Dancer. England's

new coach, arrived from Aus-

tralia yesterday and headed

straight to the shops for a

England training session on

Monday at Lilleshall after

watching Premier League

games today and tomorrow

to his World Cup squad.

with the intention of adding

Teddington today for the game against East Grinstead

in which several of the squad

will feature. Dancer, howev-

er, may be more interested in

Jason Laslett, Great Britain's

BASKETBALL

The coach is expected at

Dancer will take his first

pair of long johns.

Warrington have also

last two years.

HOCKEY

Arnold becomes a Giant

proven try-scoring ability and, consider lifting an injunction

Doyle, is joining them for nament spanning both sides

Dancer's winter warmers

*Opposites attract in old rivals' revival act

John McEnroe defeated Bjorn Borg in the Honda Challenge at the Royal Albert Hall yesterday, 2-6, 6-3, 10-7. The tennis legends showed how entertaining play can be on the ATP Senior Tour and enjoyed themselves so much that they requested a re-match at Wimbledon.

It was not the pits, not even the orchestra pits. It was simply beautiful tennis performed in the spectators, many of whom the splendid setting of the Royal Albert Hall as John McEnroe and Bjorn Borg escorted final, McEnroe edging the 3,472 devotees on a excursion to yesteryear.

Playing against each other in Britain for the first time since ing the romanticism of occasions McEnroe ended Borg's five- such as yesterday's reunion of year reign at Wimbledon in old warriors, a temptation to 1981, the pair gloried in an ar- make an idyll of idols. Suffice flag. ray of shots, classical and improvised.

The scenario, a duel of opposites in both technique and temperament, produced much that was expected - McEnroe's sublime left-handed touch play, of power and fitness. As for Borg's breathtaking passing shots - plus one or two surprises. Not least of these was Borg's eagerness to approach the net and make confident volleys, a capacity unsuspected when the Swede ruled Wimbledon's lawns with top-spin from the baseline.

So unusual was the rhythm of the points in these days of explosive serving and pounding groundstrokes that some of the action appeared to be in slow

tagonists but chiefly because of belted a ball in the direction of the enduring quality of their a line judge). timing and anticipation. When it came to alacrity of movement. both men were equal to the demands more often than not, an indication of pride in performance and another sign of how perfectly matched are their

McEnroe, three years the younger at 38, won, 2-6, 6-3, 10-7 (a "champions tie-break". first to 10 points, is used on the senior tour in the event of the two sets being split). The very notion of a tie-break delighted recalled the drama of the shootout at Wimbledon in the 1980 fourth set, 18-16, only to lose 8-6 in the fifth.

There is a risk of overcookto say that few present, while enwould underestimate the superiority of the current campaigners, headed by the splendid Pete Sampras, in terms style, however, who could ask for more?

"I wish we were still out there playing," McEnroe said. "The tie-break is fine, but I wish we had played a third set. It felt too quick. We're not that old!"

There were moments, admittedly, when one began to suspect the happy coincidence of the two sets being shared, and McEnroe's reputation would be ruined if he failed to sound off at umpires and line judges. The New Yorker was warned for

due to the seniority of the pro- unsportsmanlike conduct (he McEnroe's eyes may have

narrowed to match Borg's as soon as he realised that he had a Craven umpire (Kim Craven), and at times, the American admits, he does become a parody of himself. But even the element of pantomime was taken in the spirit of the oc-

Borg even broke his silence after being foot-faulted during the tie-break to shout to McEnroe, "You get bad calls? You get bad calls sometimes?" McEnroe gave his opponent an oldfashioned look and said. "You've got to toll with the punches.

The Swede even involved himself with some interplay with the crowd, blowing a kiss in response to the volumble support of a spectator in a gorilla mask waving a Swedish

McEnroe and Borg are keen thralled by what they saw, to extend their trip down memory lane to the lawns of Wimbledon, and mentioned the possibility of a special event on the hallowed lawns to Alan Mills, the All England Club's referee. "I think it's a great idea,"

Mills said, "and I'm sure it will be discussed. Initially, the idea of staging some kind of special event on the Centre Court or No 1 Court will be put before the order of play committee and then go to the management committee."

In keeping with the retrospective nature of yesterday's both received a presentation



match, their first against each other in London since 1981

GOLF

25th anniversary of the ATP. er rankings began in 1973. crystal trophies as players who Martina Hingis, eased into the out of three in the group stage contest. McEnroe and Borg have been among an elite semi-finals of the new Masters of the exhibition tournament, group of 13 who have been the of Champions tournament on assuring her of a place in the last from the ATP Tour to mark the world No 1 since the comput- Friday with a 6-4 7-6 win over four.

Anke Huber. The victory gave They were awarded Waterford The women's world No 1, the 17-year-old Swiss three wins

- Bill Colwill to international bockey.

sisted the temptation to return hership."

John Amaechi's much her- Sharks owner, saying: "His alded debut for Sheffield Sharks in the Budweiser League was suddenly put on hold last night. The club's owners decided the former Cleveland Cavalier's arrangement with his new club had to be investigated for possibly contravening salary cap reg-

ulations. The owners meet tomorrow and will decide whether the 6ft 10in, 27-year-old player can make his debut for Sheffield against Worthing

Bears in the evening. Amaechi's signing was announced yesterday morn- the owners unimpressed. ing with Chris Wright, the

decision to play the rest of the season in the Budweiser League vindicates that commitment of all involved in British basketball."

Wright's fellow owners appear not to agree, maybe concerned at the impact Amaechi may have on their own team's chances of winning honours this season.

Sheffield's announcement that Amaechi was donating his fee to the Manchester baskethall project run by his former junior coach, Joe Forber, also appears to have left

- Richard Taylor

BOXING

Graham faces an evening of hard work

Age will be of no concern when Julian Jackson, while the colour- land, has made a full recovery world honours on Frank Mal- Pazienza. oney's heavily byped "Good v Bad" promotion at the Wembley Arena tonight.

The fact that Graham is 38 and Pazienza 34 has done noth-pearance for eight years. Defeat ing to reduce the appeal of an would most likely send the plc don't see. intriguing fight which has stirred Sheffield southpaw tumbling interest on both sides of the Atclose-call world title fights fancied Chris Johnson in July. up my mother." against Mike McCallum and

QUOTES OF

THE WEEK

World Cup draw.

I want to start tomorrow.

Glenn Hoddle, England

coach, after Thursday's

I've knocked England out

of the World Cup once, so

why shouldn't I do it again?

Henry Kasperczak, Tuni-

sia's Polish coach, a mem-

ber of the team that

eliminated England in 1973.

• I did shiver, but only be-

cause it was freezing. Berti

Vogts, Germany coach,

after his side had drawn Yugoslavia, the US and Iran.

Rum and coke, bananas.

sugar and laid-back, lazy

black men. Speaker at the

"Caribbean Experience"

briefing for the England cricket team, on what to expect in the West Indies.

 Listen, I could have sex on Saturday afternoon and

still knock out Herol Gra-

ham. Vinny Pazienza, who

fights Graham tonight. asked if having his fiancée with him in London is too

It will be Graham's first defence of his World Boxing Council super-middleweight ti-

Pazienza, from Rhode Is-

Herol Graham and Vinnie ful Pazienza is ever-popular in from a broken neck sustained Pazienza make renewed bids for his homeland - for just being in a car accident six years ago. Doctors told him he would never walk again, let alone box.

"Herol can't stay with me." Pazienza said. "I bring a lot to tle, and his first Wembley ap- the ring - speed, power, movement and I do little things peo-

"I fight more for the thrill. down the rankings as quick as Someone who fights like me

- David Field putter of 17 years before the day with a 64.

New putter-works wonders for Straub England's Barry Lane is three tournament and duly sank five the American John Daly are

round five-under-par 66 in the Hong Kong Open yesterday.

two shots behind Frank Nobilo of New Zealand.

Straub, 30, owes his seven-

PLAYERS' CHAMPIONSHIP (Brisbaste)
Leading second-round scorps (Aus unless
stated): 135 R Allerdy 70 65, 136 S Applicty
68 68, 137 P Sencer 68 69, R Stephere 67 70,
T Carolan 70 67, 139 C McCourt 70-69, R Swenson 72 65; Matthew King 68 72, 139 C Howell 70 69; S Thompson (NUZ) 69 70, 140 L
Parsons 72-69; A Bonhomme 72 69; C Gray
71 69; J Guepy (Fr) 70 70; C Jones 70 70; S
Scahal (NUZ) 72 68 141 G Chalmers 71 70; R
David 69 72; S Robrison 72 69; G Normen 73
Bit R Parropen 72 69; D Howell (Eng) 71 70.
Selected: 143 A Coltant (Sco) 74 69; 144 K
Enicson (Swe) 75 68, 145 R Byrd (US) 73 72.

NHL: New Jersey 4 Pittsburgh 0; Ottawa 3 Los Angeles 2, Colorado 2 Chicago 1; St Louis 4 Toronto 3; San Jose 3 Vancouver 2.

Derrick Delmore, of the United States, produced a near-periect performance on Thursday niight to win the men's title at the World Junior Figure Skating Champtonships, in New Brunswick, Cariada, Delmore, a student at northern California's Stanford University, won the free skate to edge out Sergel Davydov, of Russia. Yunfel Ll, of China, finished third.

Ice skating

shots behind the leader, Tim birdies and an eagle as he Straub, after shooting a second moved to a 10-under 132 for the tournament.

"I'd had the old putter since The 27-year-old shares third I was 13 and this is the first tourplace with Italy's Costantino nament I've played since I Rocca and South Africa's stopped using it. I putted real Richard Kaplan. The trio are well today," said Straub, who is looking for his first tournament victory.

Another Englishman, Mark lantic. Graham is well-respect- he climbed them following his doesn't do it for the money. I under-par second round of 64 Davis, had set the new mark for the back nine and closed with ed in America, notably for his outstanding win over Canada's fight like someone has just beat to a change of putter. The the slightly altered Hong Kong birdies on the eighth and ninth American ditched his faithful Golf Club course earlier in the

ca had a six-hour operation in the near-by Innsbruck University Hospital fol-lowing the accident on Thursday when he lost control and was cata-

when he lost control and was cata-pulled into the side railings half-way down the course. WorkLo CIP LIGE (right, Auf): Men's pairs: 1 S Krausca and J Behrendt (Ger) into 2149sec (MD543sec and 40.568; and 40.5

Formula Ones ruling body the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile yesterday said it had accepted Stewart Grand Prix's entry for next season after receiving assurances that the team had the necessary financial

Wresham has been awarded a 1999 World Cup Group game after the sel-out success of this season's friendly

Motor racing

Rugby Union

place after the first round of the US PGA-LPGA Penney Classic in Florida. Under a best-ball format at the event, they compiled a seven-under-par 64 to lie two shots off the American leaders, Barb

Britain's Laura Davies and

among five pairs sharing third

Mucha and Mike Brisky. They began to play well on holes to go one stroke ahead of

Dottie Pepper and Jeff Sluman.

international between Wales and Ro-mania. The Welsh Rugby Union yes-terday confirmed Wrexham Football Clubs Racecourse Ground and

Club's Racecourse Ground and Stradey Park, Lisnelli as the two ad-difforal venues in Wales' qualifying pool. Wales will play their fixtures at the £120m Melennium Stadium, which is currently under construction on the former Cardiff Arms Park site. The WRU also confirmed yesterday that Twickenham is being considered as a possible location for this season's Welsh Cup fired.

Welshi CUp 1998.

DUBAI SEVENS Quaeter-finate: Fij 24 Argentins
12. Natal 17 Scotland 7, Western Semos 12 Was-blers International 20, Nav Zesland, 67 AS Aug-trale 7, Semi-finate: Fij 40 Natal 19, New Zesland, 67 47 Western Samol 8, Finat Nav Zesland 24 Fij 21. Pletis: Quartan-finate: Korsa 22 Con-de 17, Zmbelbes 21 Moroco 7, USA 5 Tomps 0, Moracciers 24 Perich Froggles 7, Semi-finate: Christober 25 Korsa 7, USA, 21 Marauders 15. Final: Zmbelbes 19 USA 7.

Sik Cut's 24-hour run of 4491 nauti-cal miles in the second leg of the Whit-bread Round the World Race has given

the boat the world record for speed. The World Salting Speed Council confirmed yesterolay that the 4491 nau-tical-mile stretch that finished on 20 No-

NEW FROM PENTAX: OUR SMALLEST

Rer sin rounds earn cards for 1998 PGA Rough MikLion DOLLAR CHALLENGE (Sun City) Leading second-nound accress 135 P Mich-elson (LS) 67 68; D Love II (LS) 68 67 139 N Price (2m) 71 68; E Bu (SA) 69 70; B Langer (Ger 69 70 140 J Pamewis (Swe) 70 70 146 C Montgomere (GB) 75 69; J Leonard (LS) 74 72; N Exido (GB) 73 73 147 M O'Mearn (LS) 75 71; I Woosnam (GB) 74 73, 146 T Leinman (US) 74 78 RACING RESULTS

70 67: I Loggast (Can) 69 68.

PGA TOUR CULLIFYING TOURNAMENT (Haines City, Fla) Leading Second-round scores (US unless states): 136 G Hill 59 67 77 L Good 69 89; B McCalaster 67 70 138 J Gallagner 71 67; G Krath 72 69; S Armss (Irin) 70 69, 139 J Hieogen 70 69; T Armsur 73 66; C Martin 70 69 140 P O'Malkey (Aus) 70 70. JP Hayes 71 69; T 69 T 69 T 70 70 70 70 70 70 70 70 71; B Surns Markerng 70 70 70 P 176 72 69; A Partiar (Aus) 71 68 141 J Gilliaon 69 72; Liceum 74 67; J Walch 67 73; J Magarines 71 70; I P rice (Aus) 73 68; S Jurgensen 74 67; C Couch 71 70. [74 phayers dut not flach becurse of a wedster delay. The top 35 finshers and flast for sex rounds earn capital for 1998 PGA Your, MILLION DOLLAR CHALLENGE (Sun Cay)

EXETER 12.50: 1. IT'S WALLACE (L. Aspell) 4-1: 2. Seran Street 9-1: 3. Province 4-1 9 ran. 3-1 far Lord Nirogen (5th) 4. 1; J. Podice. Lewes). Tolke: (540, 748, 718, 7140 DF: 2550 CSF: £3658 Tricast: £140.77 Thd:

1.20: 1. SILENT GUNS (D Salter) 6-1: 2. Gien Mirage 9-1: 3. Colette's Choice 11-1 10 ran. 7-2 for Shrebs His pursoned rid-el) 9 1 (G Edwards Minehead) Tote: DS20: C300, C360, C230, DF: DS240, CSP:

1,50: 1, BOARDROOM SHUFFLE (L. Aspell) 1-7 fav, 2, Pennymoor Prince 20-1; 3. Artistic Plan 25-1.4 ran. 12, dat. U Gifford, Findon). Your £110. DF: £480. CSF: £353. Only three finshed.

2.3s 1, MALWOOD CASTLE IA Thorriton) 5-1; 2. Special Account 9-1; 3. Ciliber Set 1: 4 Set 7 ran. 10, 37... (R Afrec Bland-tora Fours). Tette: 840; 5:33.0, 5:480 DF 5:550 CSF; 5:3807. Only three finished. 2.55: 1. SUPREME CHARM (Mr R Wak-Lagran Suprementation of the Period (No. 1) 3.30: 1, SADLER'S REALM (G Tormey)

2-1 Ew; 2. Winter's Destiny 6-1, 3. Musi-cat Monarch 15-2, 7 ron, 8, 8, (P Hobbs, Minehoad), Tote: £300; £130, £220 DF £1070 CSF: £1446 Placepot: £11070. Quadpot: £1400. Place 5: 1242.59 Place 5: 08219

12.40; 1. SUPERMICK (C Maude) 4-7 for. 2. Soldier Cove 8-1; 3. Indian Nector 8-1. 8 ran. 8, 1%, (M Pipe), Tota: 5170; 5120, 5160, 52.20 DF: 5190 CSF: 5859, Tro; 5160 NR:

1.10: 1. JASON'S BOY (Fl Johnson) 5-2; 2. Sense of Value 20-1; 3. Sentent Re-biever 11-8 for 5 min. 5 13 (J. Bradley), Total 02-60, 01-50, 02-40, DF: 64130, CSF; 628,71 53071 Ting: 5240

2.15; 1. GROCKND NUT (B Powel) 4-5 tar; 2. Lord McMurrough 4-1; 3. Stage Fright 20-1 8 ran, 12, 5. (R Buckler), Total: \$190; 0:10, 0:210, 0:300 DF: 0:500 CSF: 04:53 2.45: 1. LAREDO (Mr S Durack) 9-2; 2. Cui de Sac 3-1; 3. Brambiebil Duke Evers tav 15 mm. 7. 25. (Noel T Chance). Tota; \$580, \$130, \$100, \$100 DF; \$790. GSF; \$1678.

3.20: 1. MARKET GOSSIP (W J Tezard) 6-1; 2. Toskano 7-2; 3. Lauren's Tressure 10-1; 10 ran; 9-4 fav Indian Delight, 3, dist, (A Aner) Totae 05/70; 130, 0180; 530; DF: 0110 CSF: 034/8, Tresst: 019044, Tho:

Carthy) 4-1; 2. Ties French 13-2; 3. Danny Bell 5-2 km 16 rpd. 11, 7 (O Sherwood), Total 1300; £120, £260, £150, DF: £1950, CSF: 53051, Tro: £1020, NR: Pollys Sistex Placepot: C1420, Quadpot: C280 Place 6: £2502 Place 5; £19.14

SANDOWN 1.00: 1, COUNTRY BEAU (R Dunecody) 3-1 lay; 2, Skycub 19-1; 3, Bracey Run 25-1 21 ran. 8, 3, (J King, Swindon), Tota: £330; £150, £250, £800, DF: £2120, CSF; £4716.

1.30: 1. WISE KING (C Linux Ivol 3-1: 2. Bengers Moor 3-1; 3. Amish 5-1; b ran. 9-4 fav Dantes Caveller (4th). Nk, 1½, (J Old, Wroughton). Yota: £3.50; £190, £2.70. DF: £700. CSF. £1122. NR: Smuggler's Foint. 2.08: 1, SONG OF THE SWORD (G Bradley) 11-4: 2. Prospero 9-1; 3. Fullys-ma Crest 13-2. 9 rest. 7-4 fav Nosy Miner (pulled up), 5.31/2. (J Old, Wroughton), Total: £339; £140, £280, £180, DF: £1480, CSF: £2647. Trio: £18.70.

2.36: 1. CATIS REGRETS (A Maguire) 2-1; 2. Linton Rocks 6-1; 3. Philip's Woody 4-1.6 ran. 3-4 (av Redesmyoureel (fel), 21/, 11/. (Miss H Knight, Warntage), Total: CHAD; 52.70; 5180, 5180, DF, 58040, CSF: 57655 3.10: 1. SAMLEE (0 Bridgwater) 2-1; 2.

What A Hand 13-6 lav 4 rap. 1 (P Hobbs, Minchesol), Tota: \$280 (DF: \$290 CSF; \$529 NR: Lotte Months, Only two finished. 3.40: 1. TOUGH ACT (M A Fizgural) 8-1.
2. Najesty 14-1; 3. Rushing de Corlsy 9-4
tou 12 ran. 5, 10, (Mrs. A Panell, Puborough)
Tota: \$830; \$200, \$270, \$190. DF: \$5460.
CSF: \$9342. This: \$9450. Jeckpot: not won (pool of \$5,841,74 carried

forward to Sandown today). Placepot: £196.60 Quadpot: £18.60. Place 6: £21398. Place 5: £12792.

vember had beaten the merk set by Tostaba in her transatiantic qualification possage in July. The 10-boat Whitbread fleet will leave Fremartile on 13 December for the ,1250-mile third leg SKIIING
WORLD CUP PREESTYLE MOCULS EVENT
(Tigmas, Pri: Women: 1 E skeintyre (US)
24/495; 2 M Elfarre (Des) 2420; 1 T Miscromer
(Ser) 258; 4 C Gig (Pr) 2070; 6 A Bobyen (Des)
258; 6 C Bodrins (Ser) 217; 7 M McRul (Pri)
258; 8 T Saloys (Japan) 227; 7 M McRul (Pri)
258; 8 T Saloys (Japan) 227; 7 M McRul (Pri)
258; 8 T Saloys (Japan) 227; 7 M McRul (Pri)
258; 8 T Saloys (Japan) 227; 8 Member (US)
258; 1 T Saloys (Pri)
258; 1 Kessley (US) 254;
3 L Nossen (Can) 253; 6 D Gagher (Can)
257; 7 F Ougler (Pri) 258; 8 Roger Heilender
(Sere) 249; 3 Alex Wilson (US) 2455, 10 J
Reventock (Sere) 2484

MAHHNORA INTERNATIONAL (Benday) Sami-finds: Jandre Kran (Pal) ist J Power (Carl) 5-6 12-5 (N-5 15-13 5-17 P Nort (Sco) bt M Chalendr (Eng) 15-5 8-15 5-17 8-17

Table tennis

Table termis

PRENCH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS (Lyona)
Contitying groups: Men'te singles (estected): A Penry (Eng) bt S Region inch 22-20
21-22. Penry tit Historita (Can) 21-17 42-21 21-2;
1-12: Penry tit Kuhikai (Au) 21-17 42-21 21-2;
1-12: Penry tit Kuhikai (Au) 21-17 42-21 21-2;
1-12: Billington to S Torlots (Nigerta) 22-20
21-25: Billington to S Torlots (Nigerta) 22-20
21-25: Billington to S Calless (Fr) 21-18 21-12
Women's singles: N Dosson (Eng) bt J Hermander (Sp) 22-20 21-10; Doston loss to A Coutes (Fr) 21-14 10-21 45-21.

MASTERS OF CHAMPIONS WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT (Franklun, Ger): Group 1: Mrings (Seit) in A Hilber (Ger) 6-47-6 Group 2-1 Majos (Cros) in L Daverport (US) 2-6-6-2

52. SENIOR SINGLES AND DOUBLES CHARA-PICKSHIP (Royal Albart Hell, London): Senior Singles (accord Group): J McErroe (US) bt 8 Day (Swit) 26 6-3 (McErroe wor dockling behraik 70-7).

EVER ZOOM COMPACT. It may be small, small enough to slip into your top pocket, but it's certainly not short on features. The new efina comes with Advanced Photo System technology, built-in electronic flash, a 24-48mm zoom lens and quality Pentax optics. In fact it's the smartest little camera you can get your paws on. For information call Pentax UK Ltd on 01753 792 792 or e-mail on info@photo.pentax.co.uk. You don't need luck, you need a

much of a temptation.

TODAY'S NUMBER

The number of touchdowns scored - plus 246 yards rushed - by Corey Dillon for Cincinnati Bengals in their 41-14 rout of Tennessee Oillers in the NFL on Thursday. The figures gave Dillion the most productive game ever by a rookie running back

SPORTING DIGEST (Fri 73 70 72 75 297 A-B Sanchez (Sp.) 24 71 74 72 293 M McKay 74 75 72 72; L West (US) 72 71 76 74 294 5 Gradien (III 75 73 70 76 296 M-T Penotel-Borsel (Fri 76 73 75 72; L-Cucate 73 75 24 28 A Ropers 76 73 72 77. T Pouten 78 69 75 75 299 A Murt (Aus) 74 75 78 300 M Medit 75 75 76 74; S Moon (US) 78 72 75 L Dermoti 76 77 75 78 Moon (US) 78 72 75 L Dermoti 76 77 75 78 Moon (US) 78 72 75 L Dermoti 76 77 75 76 No. (US) 78 72 75 Cs. L Dermoti 76 77 75 76 No. (US) 78 72 75 Cs. L Dermoti 76 77 75 76 No. (US) 76 76 13 57 K Kaptan (SA) 47 68: C Rocce (In 67 68: B Lane (GB) 69 64 130 F No. (bb) (N2) 67 66 135 F Kaptan (SA) 76 65 C Rocce (In 67 68: B Lane (GB) 69 66 136 M Davis (GB) 75 66 135 K Wook Soon (No) 67 69 137 Lin Keng-ch (Isi) 67 70; D Wilson (US) 70 67: I Loggati (Can) 69 68.

American football

Basketball Latrell Sprewel, the Golden State Warrior's leading scorer this season, who was sacked earlier this week for wrto was sacked earlier this week for attacking and threatening to kill his coach, has been suspended by the NBA: Whishington 18 Sacramento 96: Dallas 105 New York 91: Houston 94 Atlanta 87; All-vaulos 102 Charlotte 92, LA Cippers 100 San Antonio 96 (od).

Cricket

TOUR NATICH (Cape town) Final day of three: Western Province Academy XI 282 (885 overs: K Ballely 77no). England Under-19 (47 overs) Match drawn. TOUR MATCH (Cage town) Final day of three: Western Province Academy XI 252 (K Bakely 77 not and 129 for 7 dec v England Underty 48 (D Henry 4-58) and 109 for 4 dec Match

Bobby George, better known as "Bob-by Dazzler" because of the bizarre outby Dazzler* Decause of the bizarre out-fits he wears, has received a favourable draw in the Embassy World Profes-sional Championship that starts on 3 January at Firnley Green. George, who qualified for the championship in Lon-don fate Thursday night only three weeks after undergoing a serious op-eration on his left knee, will meet a lef-tow qualifier. Dutchman Braulio Roncero, in the first round and then ei-ther Welshman Sean Palfrey or Aus-tralian Peter Hinkley in the second.

The Hearts manager, Jim Jefferles, is the Bells Manager of the Month for November. Ayr United's Gordon Dabziel took the First Division award, in the Second Division Clydebank manager lan McCall took the honours and another former Brancer man Manager. another former Rangers man, Neale Cooper, was the Third Division's choice

at Hos county.

Johan Cruyff was released from hospiral yesterday, 10 days after being admitted suffering chest pairs. Cruyff,
50, who underwent by-pass surgery
in 1991 after a heart attack, was chagnosed as having angina, but
surgery will not be necessary. Edgar Davids, the Dutch international midfielder, has moved from Milan to Juvenius on a five-year contract. to Luventus on a five-year Contract.

ENGLAND LIMPER-21 SCHAD (European Under-21 Championally play-off according vigreose, Norwich, 17 Decembert: Widyls (product), Repetra (incides-trough), Ki Dyer (practic), Roberts (incides-trough), Ki Dyer (practic), Sciences (Actor Vile), Ferdinand (Nics) Harri, Hall (Coverity), Servaset (Olchem), Dubarry (Croless), Gramette (Chelen), Burdering (Northigheam Press), Hagher (Arsmail), Carragher Luverpool), Olassite (OPR), sturney (CPR), Lucepard (Nics), Harris (Locasin), Bevise (Southampton), Ower (Leverpool, Johnson (Iboschi), Ower (Leverpool, Johnson (Iboschi)).

WPGET QUALIFYING 9CHOOL (Arosirs, Port Leading End scores (GB or unless stat-adt: 289 L Phio (US) 71 70 72 76 250 L Kreutz

Luge Radim Lanca, of the Czech Republic, remains paralysed despite surgery af-ter a crash during training for today's World Cup race in Igks. Austria. Lan-

HEREFORD

1.40: 1, GUTTERIOGE (Mr A Evans) 9-4 ter; 2. Distant Storm 5-1; 3. Beryffum 5-2 14 ran, 31...4. (P Evans) Tota; C100; C140, C230, C240 OF: C840 OSF: C1375 Tricast

3.50: 1. KADOU NONANTAIS (J.A.MO-

TODAY

- FA Carling Premiership

 1 Aston Vila v Coventry City

 2 Blackburn v Bolton Derby v West Ham

Nationwide League First Division 8 Bury v Middlesbrough 9 Crewe v Huddersfield

- 13 Port Vale v Birmingham 14 Portsmouth v Stoke 15 QPR v Sunderland 16 Reeding v Chartion 17 Swindon v Oxford .
- Third Division
- FA Cup second round 23 Hednesford v Darlington . 24 Macdesfield v Welsall
- 31 Torquay v Watford 32 Wigen v York Cembridge Utd v Stev Carditi v Hendon
- Auto Windscreens Shield Northern first round - Strewsburyv Harilepool -
- Bell's Scottish League Premier Division 33 Aberdeen v St Johnstone 34 Dundee United v Durdem
- First Division
- 39 St Mirren v Harmiton 40 Stirling Albion v Ayr Third Division
- Tennents Scottish Cup First round Cowdenbeath v Mor East File v Stransac
- GM Vauxhall Conference 41 Halifax v Stalybridge... 42 Hayes v Tellord 43 Kidderminster v Dover
- Dr Martens League
- Premier Division
- TOMORROW FA Carling Premiership
- FA Cup second round Soumemouth v Bristol City (LD)

Premier Division

Wanchope's wierd route to renaissance man

Two and a half years ago Paulo Wanchope was on a basketball scholarship at the University of Southern California. A career in football was not in his plans, let alone in Derby, a town he had never heard of. Today he is being hailed as one of the Premiership's most

legionnaires, which seems only appropriate for a man whose middle name is Cesar. Nick Honis reports.

promising foreign

A 21-year-old, 6ft 4in Costa Rican has entranced English football this season, flailing his arms and intriguing observers with the efficiency of his irregular style. Paulo Wanchope's spontaneity gives foreign imports a good name.

On his Derby County debut, against Manchester United at Old Trafford in April, he produced one of his trademark gangly runs, fended off all attempts to dispossess him by dodging and weaving, and finished the move with a measured left-foot shot. Derby won the match 3-2, inflicting on the champions one of only four Premiership home defeats since 1992.

Wanchope, shyer in conversation than on the pitch, seems genuinely modest as he recalls the game. "Really against Manthe ball straight into the box. If I have the space, I try to go." His analysis does not do full justice to his methods, but he concedes that his first sport has influenced

"Sometimes I make the moves of a basketball player to get away from a defender or to very important." The statistics certainly suggest this is beneficial. Despite a cartilage injury that As a teenager, the aspiring boop-shooter left Costa Rica for west coast America. By 17, he had won a sports scholarship, and at 18, all he thought about was basketball. Then he went home for a holiday and was spotted playing football with his friends. "The manager of Herediano [one of Costa Rica's leading sides] saw me play and he asked 'Who's that player?'. And he gave me the opportunity to be in a professional team and I decided to stay." Within weeks he was a first-

team regular and within months he was drafted into the national squad for his country's World Cup qualifying campaign, where his performance against the United States attracted the attention of ex-Arsenal defender and part-time agent. Bob McNab. In January this year, McNab arranged a trial for Wanchope (and his compatriot Mauricio Solis) at Queen's Park Rangers. The pair were rejected, but McNab telephoned his old friend I'm Smith and the Derby manager did not hesitate in signing them both.

Thus far Smith appears to have done little to temper his new star's flamboyance and has settled for telling him where to play, but not how. "The manager cannot do anything in the game. [He] cannot be near you telling you 'do this' or 'do that' specifically. You have to be spontaneous," Wanchope said. It is something he believes Smith sees as an asset rather than a problem. "He signed me chester United I didn't beat a because he saw that my style is lot of players," he said. "I took good. If I change my style it's not Wanchope." (For the record, he pronounces his name "Wancho-pay"). "It would be very boring if a player always does the same. And it will be easy to de-

fend if you always do the same." He adds that his style does occasionally unset Smith, but ultimately he believes the end of use my arms in the box, so it's his attacks justify their means. "Sometimes he [Smith] argues with me when I don't do it simple or when I don't pass the ball. kept him out of the game for four But that's part of the game, bemonths, he returned to action 11 cause if I take three or four language that is always the same.



or three and lose the ball, that's ing a part of the Pride Park setthe risk of the game. We have up. "It's very exciting. We have to take the chance. If the striker doesn't take the chance, you

Wanchope's role in Derby's recent renaissance is part of a wider internationalisation at the club. He is one of 11 oversess players currently in the squad. but sees their common aim as a uniting factor rather than their diverse origins being a barrier. "In football there is a football [players] and score, nobody It's not a problem," he said. He Boyz of Jamaica prop says nothing, but if I take two appears to genuinely relish be-ahead of them.

AROUND

BY RUPERT

METCALF

a good stadium and it's nice to play in a full house with a good pitch, good team-mates. So I'm

very proud to be in Derby." He was also proud to have represented his country in World Cup qualifying, and despite the disappointment of his side not making it to France next year, he can take some consolation that he was Costa Rica's highest goalscorer as Mexico, the US and the Reggae

His immediate ambitions in English football are clear. "For this team to be in Europe and to end in the top six in the League," he said. He added: "And to score lots of goals. And I don't like to say how much goals I'll score. I only wait until the season is finished and [7] see."

Whether or not he can match the strike-rate of the Premiership's leading goalscorer (and his opposite number for West Ham today, John Hartson) remains to be seen, but at least

Success comes before beauty

FAN'S EYE VIEW
NO 235
LINCOLN CITY BY GARY PARLE

Saturday 22 November 1997, 5.05pm or thereabouts. A car full of fans somewhere in Colchester.

The tension had been mounting ever since James Alexander Gordon had read out the results of Exeter City and Notts County. Both had drawn. Barely had he said Peterborough United than we knew by the tone of his voice that they had also drawn.

"We are top of the League, say we are top of the League," chorused five voices in unison. Such was the excitement that we missed our turning and paid an unscheduled visit to Colchester town centre. Never mind, because Lincoln City were top for the first time in several seasons.

Two seasons ago such a position at the head of the Third Division was unthinkable. On the pitch we were in a similar position to Doncaster Rovers, well adrift of the pack, but off it we had none of the problems that blight Rovers. After sacking two managers in 42 days, John Reames, the City chairman, turned to a man who had been out of the game since he was sacked by Preston North End after seven successive defeats -John Beck. Beck is probably one of

the most loathed managers in football - at least by fans at any clubs other than Cambridge and Preston. His appointment wasn't exactly greeted with enthusiasm by City fans, but he kept his promise to keep us in the In his two years at Sincil Bank he has attracted cou-

troversy, but on the positive side he has brought to Sincil Bank a set of players who do not easily accept defeat and, interestingly for those who despise him, many of them have played for him in the past. If fans don't like him at least there is no shortage of players prepared to are still singing "We are play under him at more than top of the League" in May

Beck's game plan is simple. Every player is a team player who knows where every other player will be at any time. The ball is moved into the opposition's defensive third as quickly as possible with the aim of winning throw-ins, corners or creating a scoring chance. One Joan signing this season failed to make an impact because he was an individual and wouldn't conform.

Some might say such a system produces players who are nothing more than Gareth Ainsworth to Port Vale for £500,000 proves that individual talent can still shine in a disciplined set-up.

It doesn't always work and many times a long ball up field fails to find its target, or its intended target hasn't done his job and is out of position. The result is an endless chorus of boos and cries of "Play it to feet". It isn't pretty to watch at

Speed Newcas times, but it is effective. Opposition managers and even City fans say it is so predictable, but if that is the case why do most teams struggle to cope with it? This season the goals

...

POS

haven't flowed for City which is unusual for a Beck side. He keeps reminding us that at Cambridge he produced sides who were top scorers in the country for several seasons. Our paltry tally of 20 in 19 games (up to 22 November) is countered by a defensive record of conceding just 14 and keeping seven consecutive clean sheets away from home.

Being top in November. while very nice and far preferable to being bottom, will mean nothing in May. There is room for improvement, not least in scoring.

Many Lincoln fans will continue to moan about how City play and Beck will still be reviled by fans around the country, but if we

Harford can take QPR job

The West Bromwich Albion tion. Barker, a former assistant clubs abided by a code of conmanager, Ray Harford, is free manager at Sheffield Wednes- duct in the Football League, to take over at Queen's Park day and manager at Shrewsbury, with the final word resting with Rangers after an "amicable Stoke and Notts County, was an independent tribunal, it agreement" at the High Court appointed as Albion's chief would eradicate such disputes. yesterday.

Albion were due to go before a judge in chambers today for Trewick, remains the club's No an injunction preventing Har- 2 as Albion begin the search to to be included in the Football ford, who resigned late on find their third manager of the Wednesday evening, from mov- year. John Barnwell, chief exing. But after discussions outside ecutive of the League Managers' court, the two First Division Association, said the case highclubs issued a joint statement lighted the need for a code of that they had reached an "am- conduct in the Football League icable agreement", as a result of similar to the one already opwhich Harford was free to join erating in the Premiership. QPR "with immediate effect".

to accept this resignation, claiming that they required six Rick Parry and drew up a set of to leave. Harford and club executives would make no further comment "at this stage".

scout by Harford in September.

Albion's coach, John "When the Premier League

Albion had initially refused was formed in 1992 we sat down with the new chief executive months' notice of his intention rules which have worked very well for both parties," he said. "It's very regrettable that the clubs should lock horns legally West Bromwich put their over this and we feel a code of chief scout, Richie Barker, in conduct would eliminate these caretaker charge of team affairs undignified squabbles. The following Harford's resigna- LMA believe if managers and

"For the LMA it just flags up

what we have been saving about the need for a code of practice League rules." Liverpool's teenage striker Michael Owen has been called

into the England Under-21 squad for the first time to try and help salvage their hopes of reaching the European Championship finals. Owen is included for the second leg of the play-off with Greece at Carrow Road on December 17 when England must overcome a two-goal deficit.

England won their qualifying group by seven points but scored only seven goals in eight group matches, with another blank in the play-off first leg in Crete. — jan Culley England Under-21 squad,

Sporting Digest, page 21

Tens of thousands of Iranian football fans, including women who ignored an official order banning their presence, packed Tehran's Azadi stadium on Tuesday to welcome home the national squad, who qualified for next year's World Cup fi-

THE WORLD

nals last weekend.

waving fans, with about 3,000 young women in their midst. cheered their team. Observers said the women rushed through gates despite police attempts to enforce a ban on female fans attending the event. Once inside, they were seated in separate stands from the male fans.

State radio and television earlier read a statement by the Iranian Football Federation saying women would not be admitted into the stadium.

home."

An estimated 70,000 flag-

Women of Tehran storm stadium in defiant mood

able space and in order to safeguard Islamic dignity, sisters will be strictly prevented from entering the Azadi stadium," the statement declared, "Sisters can witness the fervent ceremonies [on live television] at In 1994 Iran briefly sus-

pended the ban on women going to football stadiums, which dates back to the 1979 revolution which toppled the Shah. But the authorities reimposed the ban after a few weeks following protests by conservative Islamist newspapers, which said the women's presence was at odds with norms of contacts between the sexes.

Iranian football administrators have said that the ban was partly prompted by the "immoral" language and behaviour of some fans, which they claimed made football

"In view of the lack of suit- games unsuitable as family outings.

> Iran to the finals, it looks as mal" in South America. though he will be replaced as coach soon.

According to the president of the Iranian football federation, Dariush Mostafavi, the Brazilian "was appointed as a temporary coach, and we are looking for a new coach."

Vieira had just been appointed as Iran's Olympic team coach when he took charge of the national team after the former coach, Mohammad Mayeli Kohan, was sacked last month. "After the huge celebra-

tions we owe it to our people to raise our standards." Mostafavi said. He named Johan Cruyff and Carlos Bilardo, the former coach of Argentina, as possible targets.

Meanwhile, despite Valdeir Away from the World Cup, Vieira's success in steering club football continues as "nor-

> A horrendous tackle by the Argentinian international midfielder, Sergio Berti, marred the first leg of the South American Supercup final on Thursday as Argentina's River Plate held on for a 0-0 draw away to São Paulo in Brazil.

Berti raised his left foot and kicked the São Paulo midfielder Alexandre in the genitals early in the second half. He was instantly sent off by the otherwise tolerant Chilean referee, Mario Sanchez.

"That was criminal." the former Brazilian international Rivelino, who was commentating for television, said, "If he [Berti] had hit Alexandre's knee, he would have crippled the lad."



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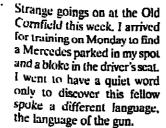
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This.

100

THE **GAFFER TAPES**

Franzi's got a dull reputation but he's actually a laugh-a-minute guy



Anyway, after I'd left the motor in Tesco's car park over the road I came back to find three of his mates in a meeting with the chairman. All were wearing big coats, thick moustaches and bulges where most people keep their wallets. Either Mark Lawrenson, Graeme Souness and Tom Selleck were joining the board or there was something even more sinister going on.

Miss Moneyecu, our latest secretary, explained they were a party of Belarus businessmen who wanted to buy the club. They were offering a cash deposit - in a variety of curren-cies. They didn't need a receipt as they were sure Sir Hirem Firem's word was his bond. can enjoy them.

Strange goings on at the Old This is not generally regarded Comfield this week, I arrived as the case: even the Chichester Club won't allow him a slate at the bar anymore, but Dave the barman tends not to settle his debts in blood - 1 suspect these guys will.

> Sir Hirem was not quite convinced about the deal and, once I discovered they intended to bring in their own cnough foreign coaches already. So I nipped off to make a quick call to the local nick. Minutes later Inspector Cools drove up in full dress uniform. We introduced him with a nod and a wink as the club's "security officer", and they made their excuses and left.

This was probably a good thing as we've a special visitor today. Apparently Prince Harry wasn't too impressed by Arsenal last week so he's come to watch us instead - he thinks there'll be more goals, though I think he's a bit cheeky asking to go in the away end so he

We were going to carpet the away end in red shagpile (personally tested by Miss Moneyecu and 1), erect a special canopy over his seat, and invite him in an executive box for preand post-match tea and truffles, But the brat insists on being treated just like an ordinary fan. So we've arranged for him to sit behind a pillar next manager, neither was I - we've to a foul-mouthed anti-royalist bigot. On the other side will

be an incontinent pensioner

who'll get up to go to the toi-

let whenever an attack devel-

ops and spill Bovril over Harry

just after the Prince has spent

so long queueing for a CJD-

burger that's he's missed the

only goal of the game. Some of our most accurate hooligans will be aiming coins at him - with his mum's face upwards - and, after the game, the police'll keep him behind for an hour. Let's hope it's raining and the supporters' bus gets bricked, then he can have the

full experience. I left the arrangements in Köpke was a natural. Franzi

der hands and headed for it on the night but Fifa said no Marseilles where I helped Franz prepare the Europe side for the World Cup draw exhibition match. Franz and I go way back; we used to ski together in Kitzbühl. I still treasure the get-well card he sent me after I broke my leg when he led me off piste. For his part he says he still remembers

the sore head he had the fol-

lowing year when I led him on

the piste. Franzi's got a dull reputation but he's actually a laugha-minute type. No sooner had I checked into my hotel and checked out the bar than I came back to my room to discover he'd draped towels over the TV, the mini-bar and the trouser press. I had to respond so I got down to training early, had a quiet word with the lads, and when Franzi arrived they all came out of the

dressing-rooms goose-stepping Incey was brilliant while

Miss Moneyecu's firm but ten- cracked up and wanted to do what spoilsports.

I took the opportunity to have a quick word with Ronaldo and his agents. They said if we could rustle up £30m he'd love to play at the Old Cornfield. So the chairman's off to Belarus on Monday.

We've already raised a couple of million: Keegan's signed the tea lady and groundsman for Fulham. We were going to bring in a couple of YTS kids to replace them but there have been a few problems - the new tea girl ran over Shaun Prone with her trolley and bruised his hip while Ivor Niggle's twisted his ankle in a hole the groundsman had dug. Apparently he was keeping his fags there in case he fancied a drag while mowing the grass. So, that's those two out for today's game. Wonder if Harry's bought his

Barry Gaffer was talking to Glenn Moore

SIDELINES

Winning their spurs at Chelsea

Jimmy Greaves made lightning look lazy when he scored on his Chelsea debut at Tottenham 40 years ago. Long before he metamor-

Ten things

Everton's

Slaven

might be

are amongst the longest in

Europe. (While the blue

side of Liverpool lives in

darkness at the moment.) 2 The Kajkavian song

Everton away wins, it hap-

3 The Una, Kupa, Sava,

Drava and Danube delta.

5 Licko Seniska. A region

of natural beauty as op-

posed to a strange fetish

pens annually. .

4 Salty pilchards.

missing

today

I Sunshine. Croatia's bear." Makes a change

2,600 hours of it every year from "Oh dear, doh! I'm

festival in Krapina. Like miracles have been expe-

6 Huntsmen's cries of aren't as likely to go down

NAME OF THE GAME No 12: HARTLEPOOL UNITED

Poor old Hartlepool are arguably the Football League's most consistently unsuccessful club, having been in its bottom division for all but three seasons since joining the Third

Division North in 1921. They had to seek re-election to the League an unequalled 14 times and have the worst FA Cup

record, never having reached the last 16. Changing their name has been about the most exciting event in the club's history: founded as Hartlepools United in 1908, the club changed its name to Hartlepool in 1968 and to Hartlepool

"Deer, doe, boar and the plug-bole.

bored, I can't bear this."

7 101 things Dalmatian.

8 The shrine of Marija

Bistrica, where the Virgin

Mary has been seen and

rienced after prayer.

Howard Kendall has ob-

viously never been there.

9 Plum and herb brandy.

10 The rejuvenating spas

at Umag, Opatija and

Crikvenica. As hot as a

post-match Goodison

bath, but the contents

HISTORY

LESSON

As Aston Villa attempt to

overcome a 2-1 deficit in the

second leg of their Uefa Cup

third-round tie against Steama

Bucharest next week they

can find some encourage-

ment from their own record

Although Villa have only

in European competition.

ever lost the first leg in Eu-

rope but gone on to win on

one occasion, they did so in

impressive style. In the first

round of the 1983-84 Uefa

Cup, Villa lost 1-0 away to

Vitoria Guimaraes, but a

Peter Withe hat-trick helped

them to a thumping 5-0 win

in the second leg. Villa lost

4-3 on aggregate to Moscow

Spartak in the next round.

that



phosed into the round TV pundit known as Greavsie, this most perfect of predators was one of a large number of players with a niche in the history of both today's opponents.

Arriving at Spurs via Milan in 1961, Greaves linked with two forwards signed from Chelsea, Bobby Smith and Les Allen, Double-winners both. Terry Venables made the same switch in '66, and as manager would buy Gordon Durie from the

The earliest transfers between the Lane and the Bridge had been in the opposite direction. Two of Spurs' FA Cupwinning side in 1901, John Kirwan and David Copeland, appeared in Chelsea's inaugural fixture four years later. Vivian Woodward, who scored Spurs' first League goal when he was also a club director and an architect, resurfaced at Chelsea after retiring.

Others with a dual connection include Danny Blanchflower Allan Harris, Tommy Harmer, Keith Weller, Micky Hazard, Graham Roberts, Colin Lee, Clive Allen (son of Les, who was swapped for Johnny Brooks), Peter Shreeves, Jason Cundy and Clive Wilson, back in Spurs' defence under Herr Gross. Talking of managerial Christians, Glenn Hoddle made quite a mark on both camps, though from Greavsie to Glenda, Spurs have had the better of the deals.

Full Speed ahead for Newcastle

As Everton languish at the foot of the Premiership, their captain, Gary Speed may be about to move to Newcastle United. Alan Nixon reports.

Kenny Dalglish is making a £5m offer for the Everton captain, Gary Speed. The Newcastle United manager is ready to take on Ron Atkinson in the race for the unsettled Welsh international midfielder.

Speed has had talks with his manager, Howard Kendall, who is naturally not keen on losing him, and there will be no sale be-

Dalglish, who is also keen on Norwich's injured Keith O'Neill, is short of left-sided players. and the Welsh captain has kept on top of his game this season despite Everton's problems.

Sheffield Wednesday are also keen on Speed, but Atkinson is not in a position to match Newcastle. He could offer players in exchange, however. Atkinson yesterday made his

first signing since returning as manager of Wednesday three weeks ago, buying the Swedish international Niclas Alexander- Saudi Arabia, but Venables has

sson for £750,000 from IFK Gothenburg.

Aston Villa's manager, Brian Little, was known to be chasing the 25-year-old, along with the Leeds United manager, George Graham. Alexandersson, however, will have to wait a week to make his debut as the club have not received international clearance in time for him to play against Barnsley on Monday.

The 26-year-old Alexandersson, who has signed a three-anda-half year deal and will watch his new club against Barnsley, will be expected to provide goals from midfield, having scored seven in 25 games for Gothenburg and three for Sweden.

Chelsea have signed a £75m fore what is likely to be a stormy deal with a finance house which AGM on Monday, but the deal will enable them to buy Stamcould happen soon afterwards. ford Bridge from the estate of the late Matthew Harding. The deal, based on a 10-year investment bond from SBC Warburg Dillon Read, will also mean the club can clear their debts and complete the rede-

velopment of the stadium. The Aston Villa goalkeeper, Mark Bosnich, has received a Uefa Cup reprieve from the Australia coach, Terry Venables. He was due to fly out on Monday with the other English-based players in Venables' squad to play in the Confederations Cup in

given Bosnich, who missed three /illa games while on World Cup play-off duty, an extra 48 hours so he can play against Steaua Bucharest on Tuesday.

The Coventry chairman, Bryan Richardson, was making another attempt yesterday to lure the Liverpool midfielder. Michael Thomas, to Highfield Road. Thomas turned down Coventry's first approach, as he wants to return to London.

Manchester United's captain, Roy Keane, injured against Leeds in September, may play before the end of the season. Keane's cruciate ligament operation is now adjudged successful. and the injury may mend by May.

The former England, Liverpool and Tottenham striker, Paul Walsh, has retired because of a knee injury. Walsh, 35, suffered ligament damage playing for Portsmouth last year.

In an 18-year career he won a League Championship and FA Cup winner's medal, and played five times for England. He has been working as a players' agent since surgery failed to repair the knee and hopes to move into management.

Charlton Athletic's Jamie Stuart has tested positive for cocaine and marijuana. He is the fifth Charlton player to test positive for drugs.



Walker and Dixon looking to roll back the years

Places in the third round of the FA Cup are at stake this weekend. Paul Newman expects some upsets along the way.

When Clive Walker and Kerry Dixon were team-mates at Chelsea in the early 1980s they can hardly have imagined they would be renewing their acquaintance in the FA Cup some 14 years later. This afternoon, however, the two men meet when Cheltenham Town entertain Boreham Wood with one of football's great prizes at stake a place in the Cup's third round.

Walker, now aged 40, came off Cheltenham's substitutes' bench last month to score the winner against Tiverton Town in the first round. On the opposing bench today will be Dixon.

SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

36, who left Doncaster Rovers should be the favourites, but the heroes of their first-round vicat the start of the season and joined his local club in order to keep fit. Dixon came on in the fourth qualifying round against Rushden & Diamonds and will again be a substitute today.

The Cheltenham-Boreham Wood tie ensures that there will be at least one non-League club in tomorrow afternoon's third round draw, which will be televised live by ITV at 6.15. However, it will be a surprise if there are not more. Three GM Vauxhall Con-

ference teams, Hednesford Town, Stevenage Borough and Hereford United, will all fancy their chances against opponents from the bottom half of the Third Division: Darlington, Cambridge United and Colch-

ester respectively. Hednesford have been insisting this week that Darlington replay, extra time and penalties to dispose of Solihill Borough in the last round and Hednesford have an exceptional Cup record over the last two years.

Last season the Staffordshire side gave Middlesbrough a scare after knocking out Blackpool and York, and in this season's first round they won away at Mark Hateley's Hull. Hednesford are second in the Conference, effectively just five places behind Darlington.

Stevenage go to Cambridge. who have been sliding down the Third Division table in recent weeks. On the equivalent day last year Stevenage won at Leyton Orient while Cambridge lost at home to Woking.

Hereford travel to Colchester but will be without the injured Ian Foster, who was one of the

Third Division sided needed a tory over Brighton, which avenged the defeat that cost Graham Turner's team their League status earlier this year. Emley's chances of beating

Lincoln City have not been helped by injuries to key players, but the UniBond League club should take heart from Lincoln's unimpressive performance in the last round. Gainsborough Trinity took the Third Division team to a replay, which they only lost 3-2.

King's Lynn, once a major power in non-League football. will relish the trip to Rotherham United, while their East Anglian neighbours, Wisbech Town, are playing in the second round for only the second time in their history. On the last occasion, 40 years ago, they lost 2-1 at Reading.

Wisbech are expecting to

give Bristol Rovers a run for their money, Gary Childs, manager of the Dr Martens League Midland Division side, says that Rovers "are a footballing side and that will suit us because that s the way we play. We've got players all over the pitch capable of scoring goals."

Ilkeston Town's Matt Carmichael faces his former michael, who scored both of likeston's goals in their firstround victory over Boston United, was sold to Scunthorpe by Lincoln City's then manager, Keith Alexander, who is now in charge of likeston.

the non-League game, while his he said.

opposite number. Ted Hardy, is the oldest manager still in the Cup at 68.

Two Ryman League teams who did well to knock out League opposition in the last round will attempt to do so again. Basingstoke Town, who disposed of Wycombe Wanderers, travel to Northampton, while Hendon, who knocked club, Scunthorpe United, Car- out Leyton Orient last month. are away to Cardiff City, their conquerors a year ago.

Basingstoke's manager, Ernie Howe, the former Fulham centre-half, has had Northampton watched and received a 13-page report on the The most familiar foes of the Second Division side. Howevafternoon will be the managers er, he will not be showing it to for Dagenham & Redbridge's his team. "If I read all that to visit to Peterborough. Barry my players they would be fright-Fry, Peterborough's manager, ened to death, and some of served a long apprenticeship in them wouldn't even turn up,"

United in 1977. Which prompts just one question: why? THIS



On 9 December 1989, the draw for the 1990 World Cup in Italy saw England grouped for their first-round games with the Republic of Ireland, the Netherlands and Egypt.

The reaction of Bobby Robson, the England manager, was echoed almost verbatim on Thursday by Glenn Hoddle. "It could have been better, could have been worse," they said, eight years apart.

In the 1990 finals, draws against their European opponents and a win over Egypt saw England progress to beat Belgium and Cameroon before going out to West Germany in the semi-final. Scotland, drawn with Brazil, Costa Rica and Sweden, fell at the first hurdle.

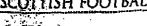
Villa have played in the Uefa Cup four times in the 1990s, but this is the first time they have progressed beyond the second round.

THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

Loans/trials Transfers Chris Coleman (defender) Blackburn to Fulham (621m) Nictas Alaxandersson (midfielder) FK

Sten (defender) Southempton on Che

Contributors: Phil Shew, Nick Herris, Paul Newman Readers' contributions welcome. Send to Sidelines, Sports Desk, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Whari, London E14 5<u>DL</u>



McLeish eager to follow the Hearts example as he tries to improve Motherwell's fortunes

The Motherwell manager, Alex remains a problem. Motherwell McLeish, recognises that Heart of Midlothian are the example his own club must follow - but is still determined to upset their title momentum at Tynecastle their travels.

McLeish cites the building of a formidable squad by the Hearts manager, Jim Jefferies, as the crucial factor to the Edinburgh club's impressive rise, and is anxious to emulate that at Fir Park, where consistency Division.

are yet to win at home in the Bell's Scottish League this season, and McLeish admits his team are finding life easier on

A win at Celtic and a hardfought draw at Hibernian are both a testament to that, and McLeish is confident of causing an upset at Hearts, who are aiming to lift themselves four points clear at the top of the Premier

that game against Celtic and since then our approach has been more focused and positive," McLeish said. "I think a lot of our younger players grew in stature after that game and now they have got to develop the right level of consistency.

Celtic face Kilmarnock at Rugby Park keen to build on only their second domestic trophy this decade, after lifting the Coca-Cola Cup last Sunday

"Our recent run started in with a convincing 3-0 win Coca-Cola Cup performance against Dundee United at

The Kilmarnock manager, Bobby Williamson, believes the much-improved form of the former Chelsea man Pat Nevin could be a crucial factor. "Pat has done really well for us lately including three goals in the last two games," he said.

The Dundee United manager. Tommy McLean, has re- a good performance and result solved to lorget last week's flat against Dunfermline.

and return to winning ways at home to Dunfermline. "Nobody at Tannadice can

deny that the last couple of weeks have been a big let-down for the club," McLean said. "But we have got to pick ourselves up from that and react in the proper manner. The best way for us to prepare for Tuesday's clash with Hearts is to get

Elsewhere, the bottom club, Aberdeen, have encouraged supporters to arrive early for the home meeting with St Johnstone because they are anticipating a higher crowd than usual to welcome their new manager, Alex Miller.

Tomorrow's televised fixture sees Rangers take on Hibernian at lbrox without their England midfielder, Paul Gascoigne, who begins a fourmatch suspension.

but the only thing most knew

about the man conducting the

World Cup draw was that he

wants to ban tackling. He does

not, but Fifa's general secretary

does have a purge planned for the

summer. Genn Moore, in Marseilles.

listened to the thoughts of one of

the most influential men in world

The man was Sepp Blatter, the 62-year-

fectionately called him the previous day.

before revealing it to the cameras.

Thursday night was Blatter's 25th draw

not doing it, as so often happens, out of ego-

can't trust anyone else not to cock it up."

the perspiration that keeps the game func-

tioning and some of the inspiration behind

all sports bureaucracies. But compare

football's relatively smooth progress towards

world domination to the mess that crick-

er sports continually find themselves in.

198 members", he notes - and, while

Havelange has been the driving force be-

hind football's development outside the tra-

ditional Europe-South America axis.

Blatter has often been the executor. This

aspect was his first job at Fifa after Have-

lange, soon after his own election as pres-

ident, had spotted him working for Swiss

Timing - though not as a watchmaker - at

laws, or rather, as Blatter says, "their in-

After initial reservations they have gener-

been for the good but recent

In England it is Fifa's tinkering with the

the Munich Olympics.

The game is now truly global - "we have

its continued development.

seilles on Thursday night.

football.

tive grounds: "We have enough people coming and going as it is, with three substitutes in each side." "The referee should not have a soft option," Blatter adds. "He should be strong enough to say 'that's a yellow or that's a red'. There is a large body of thought that

مستحدوبين ملتوطية

Asion Villa v Covening

فالمعارض برباء

be showing a red." The use of video to assist referees, which is supported by Platini, is rejected until it is perfect - and then only for assessing whether the ball has gone over the line. The principle of professional referees - though not to the extent it is their sole livelihood - receives favour, the idea of two referees does not

thinks the main problem is the yellow card

- a lot of referees go for yellow when they

know, in their heart of hearts, they should

On to another bugbear, the everexpanding fixture list. "The quickest and easiest way to reduce the pressure on players remains reducing the top division by two clubs - that immediately cuts out fourmatches a season. Obviously the clubs are not too keen as it will have a commercial impact but we should not kid ourselves. Most clubs, when they get an opportunity for a few free days, go off and play a friend-

Clubs, especially in Europe, are growing in wealth and, subsequently, power. The prospect of Fifa struggling to retain both control and the primacy of international football is a real one.

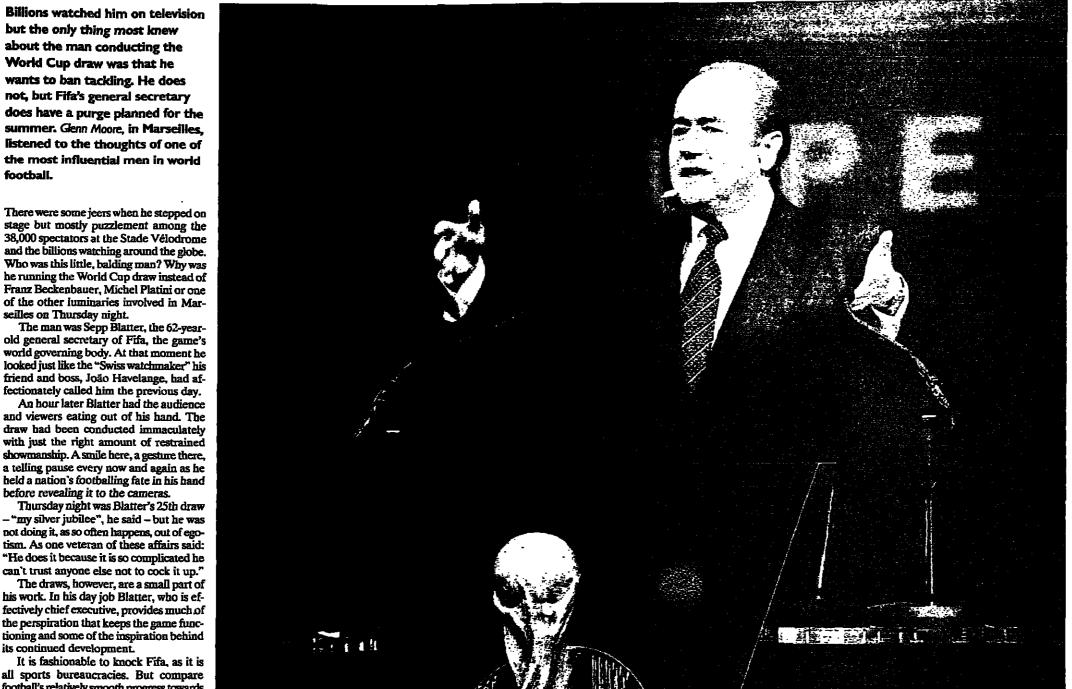
We need to maintain an equilibrium. You only have to look at Euro 96 or a World Cup, the whole country is united behind one team. National teams are and always will be essential to the football landscape.

"Football has become very attractive to people who have never been involved in it. Bureaucrats and businessman think they can get a higher profile for themselves by getting involved, and one of the big problems in football is not the game itself but the people on its periphery.

They are there because their wallet is in football and, in many cases, they are smarter than those who are there because their heart is in football."

Blatter, while influential, is technically just one of Fifa's 60 salaried employees (average age 35). While he influences and executes policy, Havelange, as president, shapes it. The 81-year-old Brazilian retires next summer and, this week, annointed Blatter his preferred successor with the words: "If my friend wins [the election] I would shake his hand. If he lost I would weep."

Very touching, but Blatter has yet to indicate he even wants the post - Lennart Johansson, the president of European football's governing body. Uefa, is the only declared candidate. Will Blatter stand? He gives a classic politician's answer which reveals nothing but, so long as he feels he can bly be happy enough to keep juggling the



et, both rugby codes, athletics and many oth- Fifa's general secretary, Sepp Blatter, delivers a speech of welcome at the Stade Vélodrome in Marseilles during Thursday's World Cup draw

he was going too far. "Blatter wants to outlaw tackling" went the headlines. Does he?

"Football is incredibly popular and sometimes it is a victim of its popularity," he said after we met in Marseilles. "The important thing is we get people to talk about football but sometimes they get the wrong interpretation. This was literally a mistranslation due to there being two words for tackle in German. The point I was trying to make was that we have banned terpretation", which has been noticed. the tackle from behind but people are still making dangerous tackies and we must tighten the regulations on that."

The inspiration for this, incidentally, comes not from Blatter but from Platini. "In Italy in 1991 Michel said in the task force [a body set up by Blatter to consider ways of improving the game] we should ban tackling. Everyone thought 'you can't do that'. He was pretty radical at the time but as the game has got faster we have seen more tackles from behind and that is what Michel was really on about. It is not just to prevent ball players like Platini himself - or Marco van Basten whose career was ended by such tackles - but also the ordinary Saturday afternoon player who gets

crunched by people coming in from behind. or from the side, with feet in the air."

This initiative was successfully brought in before the 1994 World Cup. So what will referees, at their March get-together, betold to crack down on next summer?

"There will be a lot of emphasis on the distance of the wall at a free-kick. There accept that is the way to do it." is no point talking about giving referees laser zappers shining on the ground and the referee saying 'get back to there' because two yellows. Two possible disciplinary adplayers won't take any notice. Then what, does the referee zap them off at the knee? The law is there, they should be 9.15 me-

tres from the ball and if they don't get back it is in the referees' power to give the nearest guy a yellow card - all they have to do is implement it. The World Cup is the shop window, if you can get the referees to apply the laws of the game strictly in it, referees and players at lower levels will

This will, inevitably, lead to a rash of yellow cards and dismissals of players collecting work with Johansson, Blatter will probajustments, rugby league's sin-bin and hock- balls he already has in his grasp. Football ey's use of three cards to similar effect, have—can be grateful he appears to possess a safe both been rejected partly on administra- pair of hands.

When the black market offers a way around the red tape

Every football fan should go to a World Cup tournament; STEVE being part of the beautiful game's greatest gathering is an unforgettable experience. With next year's finals if not ON THE quite coming home then at least visiting the neighbours, many supporters will be OBTAINING A

For UK-based fans, travelling to France is easy - a plethora of trains, boats, cars and planes means that all 10 venues should be easily and affordably accessed. Accom- could choose which fixtures sponsor had so many excess modation, from hotels to and teams to watch. Fans rescamp sites, is plentiful and generally of a high standard. Which just leaves getting hold had no such choice. Allocations of tickets.

ticket distribution systems ed) are under 10 per cent of employed by World Cup and ground capacity. And with five European Championship of the venues holding fewer organisers have long been large blocks of tickets as early as possible to organisations (and even individuals) who then face the task of regames. 200,000 of the 2.5 mil-French citizens bought all cards covering every group purchase a series of cards. Widespread trading and swap- Fifa-approved ticket sales former international ping of these therefore seems inevitable.

BEAUCHAMPE

TRAUMAS OF tempted to make this the one. TICKET FOR FRANCE 98

ident in the remaining 190 Fifamember countries effectively to the 32 qualifiers for their And it's a minefield. The own matches (France exceptthan 40,000 spectators, most underpinned by the same ba- countries will find demand sic principles. The aim is to sell out-stripping supply. Allocations for other games are minuscule, and for some fixtures they can be counted in tens.

At least French citizens

The system is crazy. If you distributing or perhaps re- a) wish to follow any country selling them to people who other than the one in which actually intend going to the you reside; b) live in a country that failed to qualify; or c) lion tickets available for find that your own country's al-France are being sold to tour location is over subscribed, operators, with a further then obtaining tickets offi-300,000 set aside for sponsors cially means approaching tour and commercial affiliates. operators. Using their dominant market position, they 1.27 million France Passes - can charge excessively for their packages (I was quoted and round of 16 match at a £1,600 for a trip to the semispecified venue. Effectively, final and final by one English from exploiting and abusing this is a season ticket, but its company). The only alternainflexibility means that to at- tive for most supporters is France 98, a shambles is guartend games with friends or rel- the black market, which, atives, or to travel to different though risky and unprevenues, supporters had to dictable, might bring results.

A consequence of these Steve Beauchampe is a mechanisms is that (for all but officer of the Football

often thousands of tickets searching for buyers, sometimes right up until match day. Unable to purchase affordably priced tickets in England, I flew to the 1994 World Cup ticketless, targeted five games (two of which organisers insisted were sold out) and got into every one, just once paying above face value, and then only by \$5 (£3). One was marked Israeli FA; a friend's read property of the Panamanian FA. At Italia 90, one tickets for the England v Cameroon match that they gave fistfuls away outside the

stadium before kick-off. So, while frustrated fans agonise over whether to travel to France, and those with blocks of tickets desperately try to find buyers for them, World Cup organisers can relax, safe in the knowledge that ticket distribution is no longer their problem. Instead, they are able to tell both Fifa and the world's media that high ticket sales have helped ensure the tournament's prof-

A fundamental rethink is needed, aimed at getting tickets directly from tournament organisers to those fans who actually wish to attend games. The feasibility of a system which allows tickets to be sold via credit cards and the Internet should be investigated and steps taken to prevent tour operators and national FAs their access to tickets. For anteed, but there is still time to improve things for Euro 2000 and beyond.

the biggest fixtures) there are Supporters' Association.

hoping to build bridges

Alan Rothenberg, the United States Soccer Federation president, hopes that his national side's World Cup first-round game against Iran may be used to build bridges. *Maybe we can have soccer diplomacy like we had ping-pong diplomacy with China," he said yesterday.

The States and Iran have been enemies since the Islamic revolution toppled the American-backed Shah in 1979 and 52 hostages were held at the US Embassy in Tehran for 444 days. Eighteen years later, the nations have not resumed diplomatic relations.

"I don't think President Clinton is going to that game." the US captain, John Harkes, said yesterday.

Both teams will attempt to avoid the political distractions. "The meaning of Fifa Ithe game's world governing body) is peace and unity," the Iranian football federation president. Dariush Mostafavi, said. "We are thinking only of soccer, not politics. We are friends of the people of the USA. However, I think we have a chance of beating the United States because they are definitely not better than us."

"I don't think it's the group of death." the US coach. Steve Sampson, said. "I think there are one or two more groups that are stronger than ours."

The Romanian captain. Gheorghe Hagi, will retire from international football after next year's World Cup finals.

"Hagi has played for 18 vears at the greatest level of soccer and this will be enough for him," his agent, Giovanni Becali, said yesterday.

Hagi, 32, led his team-mates to the World Cup quarter-finals in 1994. During the qualifying rounds, he reached a record 32 goals for Romania. His next game will be his 108th for his

United States Small town may face rude awakening

Despite the poor reputation of English supporters, John Lichfield reports from Paris that their hosts for the final World Cup group match next year are looking forward to their presence.

Lens, the venue of one of England's three first-stage matches. is the smallest town ever to stage a World Cup game.

The industrial town only 40 miles from the English Channel. says it is "delighted" to have drawn one of England's fixtures. Whether the pleasure will survive the night of 26 June, when England play Colombia in the last match in Group G is open to question.

The Felix-Bollaert stadium holds 41,275 people (6,000 more than the town) and under the ticketing rules. England should be allocated just over 4,000 seats, with a few hundred more

available through accredited travel firms. Any tickets returned by Colombia will be sold to people with French addresses and French bank accounts.

With Lens being so accessifrom Calais by autoroute), this may be a recipe for trouble, with hundreds of ticketless fans crossing the Channel, But officials in the town say they are pleased and honoured to have drawn their near-neighbours; they also hope the Jamaica-Croatia game on 14 June will in attract London-

based West Indians. "I have spoken to dozens of officials and politicians in the town, and no one is worried in the least bit," said Philippe Lectory, head of the Lens office of the regional newspaper La Voix du Nord, "On the contrary, they think it is a great honour.

"They say they have been assured that supporters of the English national team are not like supporters of the big English clubs. They are much more

If this is the level of research conducted by the town, Lens may be in for a rude awakening indeed. A spokesman at the Town Hall said senior officials would consider what extra preble from England (30 minutes - cautions might be needed. At present, they were "delighted" with the outcome of the draw, which also gives them Germany versus Yugoslavia and

> Spain against Bulgaria. The draw emphasis the inflexibility of the system for allocating matches next year; on the same night, in the same Group. Romania and Tunisia, will be playing the new 80,000 capacity Stade de France near Paris. The organisers could switch the games but, with a large Tunisian community in Paris, this is said to be extremely unlikely.

> English supporters with tickets for the Colombia game should probably consider staying elsewhere (in Lille or on the Channel coast). Lens has only one hotel on the list recommended by the World Cup organising committee. By contrast,

the venues for England's first phase matches, Toulouse and Marseilles, are among the largest cities in France.

The large North African community in Marseilles makes England's opening match on 15 June almost a home game for Tunisia. Officials in the cities also said vesterday that they had no reason to anticipate trouble with English fans after the generally good experience during the Tournoi de France last summer. Despite Scottish fears that their fans may be squeezed out of the World Cup's opening fixture, against Brazil, organisers were clear yesterday that the usual rules on ticket allocation will apply. Of the \$0,000 tickets for the game at St Denis, the French allocation has already been sold or at least accounted for. Of the other 28 per cent, eight per cent will go to tour operators, while the other 30 per cent will be divided between the Brazilian and Scottish authorities - giving Scottish fans a min-

Hoddle seeks way to avoid tension

With the World Cup draw finally made, **England and Scotland** are finalising their preparations and as Glenn Moore discovers, Glenn Hoddle's men may be at home when the Scots open the tournament.

England, like most of their supporters, could begin their World Cup watching Scotland take on Brazil from the comfort

beit without the case of beer. That is one scenario being considered by Glenn Hoddle as he seeks a way to avoid England's late start to next summer's tour- with a week abroad, in Portu- around Lyon and St Etienne.

tions England do not need to are given time off to be with arrive in France until the their families. They would then evening of 10 June, five days meet up at Bisham Abbey, their with Tunisia in Marseille and a out to their World Cup retreat few hours after the Scots open at La Baule, near Nantes. the competition in Paris. "I'm happy with the draw but

not the late start," said Hoddle in Marseille vesterday, "I would prefer to get under way earlier. There will be matches being played, the team will watch them on television but not be able to play themselves. That of their own living room - al- could lead to a build-up in tension. We could watch the

opening ceremony then fly out." England's pre-tournament preparations are likely to begin

nament counting against them. gal, Spain or France, perhaps Under World Cup regula- with a game, before the players

> From this attractive Britlany resort they will travel to each match by air the day before the game and return to the Arlantic coast afterwards, Hoddle, who had already scouted Marseille and Lens, flew back for today's Inverpool v Manchester United game leaving FA staff to look for overnight accommoundecided about their likely

vesterday.

Both teams will also be stepping up their couting operation. especially in reference to before their opening fixture domestic base, before flying. African teams draw by England Tunisia and Morocco, the north and Scotland respectively.

Should England qualify second from their group they could face Argentina, Germany and Brazil in seven days. Or they might face unexpected opposition in the second round though it is hard to imagine either Japan or Jamaica qualifying at the expense of Argentina or

Croatia. "Whoever we play will not be dation in Toulouse. Scotland are casy, said Hoddle, "If it is a sur-Prise team they will be there for base, Craig Brown and his staff a reason - because they are a were assessing options, mainly good side,"

France the target for goal-hunters Fowler and Cole

25/FOOTBALL

Unpredictable Liverpool could surprise us all by getting the better of Manchester United today in a game that also gives rival England strikers the chance to show their World Cup worth.

Phil Show looks at the weekend ahead while Nick Harris (below) алаlyses the programme match by match.

a speciacle that engaged an entire planet to the parochial business of Premiership success and survival, both Liverpool and Everton have the world to

In their last home fexture, Liverpool lost humiliatingly to the next, this morning, they confront Manchester United. It speaks volumes for their baffling inconsistency and exceptional capabilities that no one will be unduly surprised if they defeat the champions.

Roy Evans' prospects of continuing as Liverpool manager did not look auspicious after the Barnsley débâcle. Before United there was the small matter of a trip to Ar-

Marseilles to Merseyside, from in microcosm: Steve McManaman, languid for most of the match, suddenly stirred himself to win the match with a virtuoso goal.

United realise better than most the folly of characterising any game as crucial or decisive before the season has the bottom club, Barnsley. In even reached the half-way stage. Alex Ferguson was no France. more triumphalist after Sunday's rout of Blackburn than he was panicked by defeat at Arsenal last month.

That said, the match could make or break Liverpool's chances of featuring in the title race. They are currently nine points off the pace with a game in hand. A 12-point deficit would present psychological as well as practical difsenal. Highbury presented ficulties, especially now that

centrate on defending the title. Suspension and injury have

spared squeamish spectators the sight of Paul Ince and Roy Keane going head to head, but the match will provide a fascinating comparison between two strikers who may be competing for one place in England's World Cup squad for Robbie Fowler returns for

Liverpool, almost certainly to link up with Michael Owen in a bid to expose Gary Pallister's susceptibility to pace. Andy Cole will be striving to show that his glut of goals for United against Barnsley and Sheffield Wednesday can be maintained against Evans' rather quicker defenders. With a 7ft 6in bronze cast of Bill Shankly newly unveiled at

for centre-backs to look stat-

be in a position where being cast adrift referred to the leadership rather than last place. After another week in which their chairman, Peter Johnson, failed to clarify the position regarding what funds, if апу, are available to Howard Kendall, they travel to Leeds seeking to end two desperate

It is a year next week since Everton beat Derby at the Baseball Ground with a lastminute goal, their last away win in 20 games. Worse still, their record at Elland Road shows not a single success in 32 League visits stretching back to 1951.

A sixth successive Pre-

Everton needing to win half their remaining matches to How Everton would love to stay up. Leeds, in contrast, have won four in a row for the first time since April 1995 when, coincidentally, Howard Wilkinson was named Carling Manager of the Month as

George Graham was yester-

Man for man, Everton's line-up does not look conspicuously inferior to Leeds'; the difference is that Graham has instilled a spirit which has helped the Yorkshire side come from behind in the last three victories. Whatever happens today, Johnson is assured of a rough ride at Goodison's annual meeting on Monday.

Chelsea's pursuit of Manchester United collides headon with Tottenham's need to

As the spotlight swings from their problems and potential. United are all but free to con- Anfield, it could be a bad day miership defeat would leave put clear water between themselves and the relegation zone. Precedent does not augur well for Christian Gross in his first home game in charge of Spurs. Chelsea have won five and lost none in eight meetings at White Hart Lane dating back three of Hartson's 17 goals to a decade.

Arsenal's championship hopes are in danger of becoming history unless they snap out of a six-match run without Pride Park suggests they a win. The trek to Newcastle, who may have Faustino Asprilla back as they try to cling on the leaders' coat-tails themselves, will have given them time to reflect on the resilience which won the day at St James' Park a year ago. Arsène Wenger's team played all but 22 minutes without the sent-off Tony Adams, yet still prevailed with

John Hartson's sco spree, coinciding with six i ren outings for Wright prompted once-unthinks doubts about Wenger's dom in selling the Welshma West Ham. However. come away from Upton P. mirroring his side's return just one point out of 21 on road. Derby's unbeaten sta

struggle to break the spell But if Everton, Spurs West Ham feel they are lab ing against the odds, spar thought for Coventry. Alre in their customary lowly p tion, and lacking the inju Gary McAllister, they make short hop to Aston Villa kn ing they have never won th despite 23 attempts spr



Aston Villa v Coventry

Aston Villa's versatile Simon Grayson may start his first game for a month as central defenders Gareth Southgate, Riccardo Scimeca and David Hughes are all doubtful through injury. Midfielder lan Taylor will once again be missing as he sits out the final game of a threematch ban. Goalkeeper Mark Bosnich, back from international duty with Australia, is set to return to the side in place of former England Under-21 keeper Michael Oakes. Villa have won only one of their past six Premiership games.

Coventry captain Gary McAllister misses the derby with a knee injury sustained last week. Coventry, who have never won at Villa Park, recall David Burnows after a one-game absence. He was left out of the side that lost 2-0 at home to Leicester last week because he was involved in proposed transfer swap with Sheffield Wednesday's Mari: Pembridge, which has now fallen through. Irish midfielder Willie Boland is suspended, Norwegian Trond Soltvedt and Dane Martin Johansen are in contention to take over in midfield.



Blackburn v Bolton

Blackburn's leading scorer Chris Sutton (knee) has had treatment and should be fit, while captain Tim Sherwood and defender leff Kenna have both passed tests on minor injuries. Norwegan defender Tore Pedersen has a minor injury but will be left out anyway, as Colin Hendry returns. Hendry has been out for a month with a back injury and will replace Pedersen, partnering Stephane Henchoz in defence. Kevin Gallacher is now fully fit and available after being on the substitutes' bench at Old Trafford last week.

Bolton defender Gerry Taggart, having completed a six-match ban, is available for selection. Central defender Chris Fairclough and fullback Neil Cox are also available after recovering from injury, but all three may struggle to win immediate recalls. Colin Todd is likely to begin with a back four of captain Gudni Bergsson, Mark Fish, Andy Todd, and Mike Whitlow, with Taggart on the bench. Todd's side will be buoyed by their I-O win over Newcastle last Monday, and will start Nathan Blake and Dean Holdsworth up front.

wakenin

Derby v West Ham

Igor Stimac ends a two-month absence when he returns to firstteam football today. The Derby captain has finally recovered from the back injury that has kept him out since October and will replace Dean Yates. Although Stimac is back, Danish defender Jacob Laursen is still out with a knee injury and midfielder Robbie van der Laan misses his eighth game with a damaged ankle. Derby, unbeaten at home in Premiership, will be looking to recover from their 4-0 defeat at Chelsea last week.

Stan Lazaridis and Andy Impey are doubts for West Ham today but Paul kitson should make a return after 10 weeks out with a groin injury. Goalkeeper Ludek Miklosko missed the 4-1 win over Crystal Palace on Wednesday with a neck injury, and might not feature. Midfielder Frank Lampard has recovered from the virus which has kept him out for two games. The Hammers' will be looking to replicate their home form - nine wins from the last 10 games - away, where they have won just once and lost seven times this season.



Leeds v Everton

West Ham 9

Everton

Southampton 7 3 5

Two of Leeds' international contingent, Lucas Radebe and Harry Kewell, are doubtful for today. South African defender Radebe, who will fly out immediately after the game for tomorrow's friendly with Brazil in Johannesburg, might play despite a groin strain, but Australian striker Kewell has a knee problem which has only allowed him to undergo light training this week. Captain David Hopkin is definitely out as he completes a three-game suspension. Leeds' manager. George Graham, has steered his side to four consecutive Premiership wins.

Everton are likely to recall Andy Hinchcliffe as they attempt to end a sequence of 20 successive away games without a win stretching back to a 1-0 victory win at Derby in December last year. Dave Watson also returns to the squad after injury today. New Norwegian goalkeeper Thomas Myhre has recovered from a midweek training injury and will also be in the squad, although Neville Southall is expected to play, after recovering from bruised ribs.



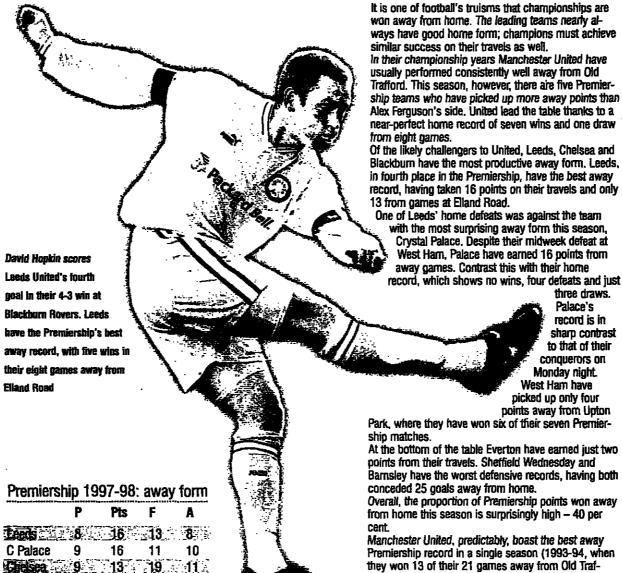
Leicester v Crystal Palace

Martin O'Neill's side are back in the Premiership top six after their 2-0 victory at Coventry last weekend. However, O'Neill could be without eight players today, ian Marshall, Steve Walsh and Steve Guppy face late fitness tests after joining long-term absentee Scott Taylor on the injury list, while Garry Parker remains absent because his daughter is seriously ill. Emile Heskey is still suspended. Tony Cottee is on loan at Birmingham and Mark Robins is looking for a new club in Greece, Rob Ullathorne could be added to the squad for

the first time since breaking his ankle 10 months ago Crystal Palace are likely to be without Jamie Smith, who limped off after D minutes of the 4-1 midweek defeat at West Ham. Smith may yet recover, otherwise another player with an ankle problem. Andy Roberts, is fit enough to travel and could play as could Bruce Dyer Attilio Lombardo remains out with thigh muscle injury picked up while training with Italy prior to their World Cup qualifying play-off against Russia Israeli Itzik Zohar could get only his second Premiership start.

..And statistics

Away form holds the key



ford), while Leeds have the worst record: in 1992-93 Leicester 7 13 they failed to win a single game away from home, Backhum 8 13 10 8 though they avoided relegation thanks to their good form at Elland Road, where they lost only once. Man United 8 12 13 8 Windledon 7 11 8 7 10 Best Premiership away record before reduction to 20 clubs Liverpool 8 Man United (93-94) 21 13 5 2 8 41 25 41 44 Best Premiership away record since reduction to 20 clubs Tottenham 8 5 6 14 9 6 4 2 26 74 33 Coventry 7 Shell Wed 8 5 13

Worst Premiership away record

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: HOW THEY STAND

13

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an Ian Wright goal.

Liverpool v Man Utd

Leading scorer Liverpool, who helped Manchester United last Sunday by

Arsenal at Highbury, face up to their biggest test of the seaso out inspirational captain and former Old Trafford midfield ince, who completes his three-match suspension. Inces abs compensated for by the return of Robbie Fowler (ban), who ly to replace Karlheinz Riedle and partner Michael Owen in Rob Jones is not yet fully recovered from an Achilles probler Mark Wright (back) is still not ready for a recall. Out-of-favour Thomas, who has rejected a move to Coventry, is unlikely Manchester United's Gary Pallister (hip) and Nicky Butt (shir needed treatment following last week's 4-0 win over Blackbi both were yesterday cleared by Alex Ferguson to play at today. Ferguson may well leave last Sunday's side unchange Paul Scholes is still suspended, and Roy Keane and Denis In injured. United go into the game with a three-point cushio large goal-difference lead at the top of the Premiership.

Newcastle v Arsenal

Faustino Asprilla could eventually make his return for Newc ter tearing a stomach muscle during their Champions' League in Kiev two months ago. He is nearly fully recovered from tive surgery. John Barnes was thought to have torn a hame last Saturday's 2-1 win at Crystal Palace but it was only a cr he is likely to start along with goalkeeper Shay Given, whose der and ankle injuries have cleared up.

Nicolas Anelka (ankle) is available again for Arsenal after n and could threaten the place of the out-of-form lan Wright Vieira (knee) is still out, although he could return next we Parlour (knee) has an outside chance of passing a late fitm Steve Bould completes a three-match ban for five yellow or Frenchman Gilles Grimandi starts one. Arsene Wenger ha cide whether to change his formation, bringing in a third cert alongside Adams and Martin Keown, or study to his favoure with Alberto Mendez challenging Stephen Hughes for a midfie



Tottenham v Chelsea

Leading scorer

Christian Gross has a number of injury problems. Sol Ca shoulder strain makes him doubtful, although there is a ch will be fit. If Campbell fails to make the team, Gross will captain's armband to Colin Calderwood. Calderwood did ure in the first team towards the end of Gerry Francis' re was employed by Gross in a midfield holding role in last 2.0 win at Everton. Chris Armstrong is still a long-term at while Steffen Iversen (foot) and Rory Allen (anl:le) are both Jose Dominguez has recovered from injury and is back in th Roud Gullit, yet to field an unchanged Chelsea side in back matches this season, has no fresh injury worries after las 4-0 win over Derby but is still without Eddie Newton (bro and Gustavo Poyet (ruptured knee ligament). Italian striker ca Vialli, still Chelsea's top scorer with 10 goals in nine gan left out against Derby but is in a squad of 19 today, along t young midfielder Mark Nicholls and Gullit himself.



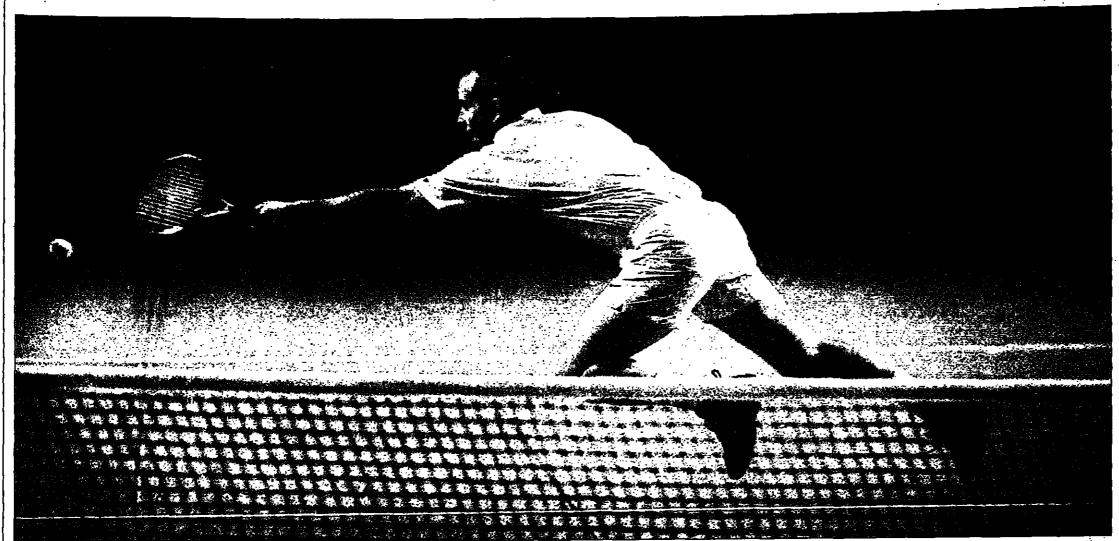
Wimbledon v Southampton Leading scorer

Joe kinnear is without five of his first-team squad for tomo Wimbledon's injury crisis worsens, Jason Euell and John G are long-term injuries and Brian McAllister and Alan Lim not responded to treatment. Efan Ekoku will have a late fit on an injured ankle. Kinnear now hopes that with the Wo finalised, his international players, especially Jamaica's Robb will be able to concentrate on domestic matters.

Norwegian international Egil Ostenstad is in contention fo to Southampton's starting line-up for the first time in two Ostenstad has not started a game since undergoing ankled in October but the striker scored for the reserves in midter appearing as a late substitute in the 3-2 home defeat against Wednesday last weekend. Kevin Davies, named as joint Car er of the Month for November this week, will talle his pla tack, looking to add to his 10 goals this season as Saints loo a run of three successive defeats.

FAIR PLAY LEAGUE UNFAIR PLAY LEA

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15A Wilde9 2 22 32 3.56	15 Soton 16 0 26 2
16N Barry9 1 27 32 3.56	16 Man Utd 16 0 25 2
17 M Riley 8 1 23 28 3.50	17 Barnsley 16 0 24 2
18K Burge8 0 23 23 288	18 Wimbledon 17 0 25 2
19S Lodge9 0 19 19 2.11	19 Leicester16 1 18 2 20 A Villa16 1 16 2
Premiership matches only; Red cerds: 5pts. Yellow: 1pt; Includes abandoned	Red cards: Spts. Yellow: 1pt;
Derby-Wimbledon and West Ham-	abandoned Derby-Wimbledon
Country Palmer matches	Ham- Crystal Palace matches



John McEnroe stretches for the ball during his victory over Bjorn Borg in the ATP Senior Tour of Champions at the Royal Albert Hall yesterday

Report, page 21: Photograph: Robert Hallam

RUGBY UNION

Coaches wrestle with different worlds in final Test

If Clive Woodward's England are climbing t purposefully among the foothills of the international rugby mountain, John Hart's All Blacks are so enjoying the view from

the summit of Everest that they are in no hurry to descend. Chris Hewett expects New Zealand to touch even greater heights this afternoon.

England in turmoil. New Zealand in Arcadia. Four attritional weeks on the road have knocked chunks out of both sides and neither will venture unscathed into today's second Test at Twickenhowever. While Clive Woodwrestling with selection riddles at stand-off, wing, prop and

the only dilemma facing the All Blacks was whether Zinzan Brooke, their majestic No 8, should celebrate his 100th and last game for the silver fern by scoring to the left of the English posts or the right.

fools of us all, of course, although there is more likelihood of Zinny flummoxing everyone by scoring between the posts than of England turning the world on its head by inflicting what would be only the second defeat on the All Blacks since John Hart took over some 30 matches ago.

Lawrence Dallaglio's men should want this one more than the tourists, if only to earn Woodward some sort of reward for the spirit of adventure he has brought to the national cause. Sadly, England are no better placed to sneak a psyham. The similarity ends there, chological advantage than they are to steal a technical or tacward has spent his week tical march on the finest side to visit these shores since Basil Kenyon's Springboks gave hooker, anyone might have British backsides a fearful been forgiven for thinking that Grand Slam kicking in 1951.

Zealand in 1993 that rankles with Hart. He was out in the North Island cold at the time. The grem-Events may conspire to make stemming as it does from events

Hart was genuinely angered we've played at Twickenham Martin Johnson's assault on before so it won't be happening

laden 15-9 victory over New sulted by Richard Cockerill's til the final whistle this afternoon one-man invasion of the haka and, if truth be told, wholly deflated by his side's failure to use lin lurking under the coach's skin two early tries as the launchpad "Maybe we let the occasion get Old Trafford a fortnight ago. to us," he said yesterday, "but

in '99-we're talking about one-**ENGLAND V NEW ZEALAND** did, would it destroy the things Bath 15 C Culle might yet achieve in '98? Not in ..Sale 14 | Wilson my book, it wouldn't. Lewester 13 F Bunce .N Harbou "There are things for us to _Bath **i2 W Little** _N Harbou celebrate in this game that will have thrown up." Lecester II I Lomu. ...Counties Northampton 10 A Mehrtens ...Canterbur

.Canterbury, capt

...Manawati

...Auckland

...Auckland

_.Otae:

...N Harbou

cap - and I want us to do right _Southland by those landmarks." _Auchland

way out of trouble. Which is precisely what he will not do.

"If the World Cup was being played this month, we'd be in no own sake. "International rugby position to win it." he said. "But sense to play for anything but years' time. I have a vision of how the present," he said. "I don't we should be playing and I intend see the 1999 World Cup as the to stick to it, both against New Zealand and throughout the Five Nations in the new year. Yes, off matches, after all - but, if we I'm disappointed we're going into this game without a win. No, I'm we achieved in '96 and '97 and not going to ditch my opinions. This is no time to start fudging the issues that this series against

The absence of Craig Dowd

foot, Unfortunately, England

the southern hemisphere sides never happen again - Zinny's The issues today are concenretirement, Olo Brown's 50th trated in two distinct areas: the respective front and back threes.

For Woodward, 1999 is what and Sean Fitzpatrick undenithis exercise is all about. Defeat ably lends New Zealand's front today will leave him without a row a more human appearance victory from his first four Tests and a world-class opposing trio and, given the fact that the fifth might do enough to force the Brooke brothers, Andrew Mehrwill be against France in Paris, a man of weaker will might be tens and the rest on to the back tempted to revert to English type, play safe on the selection have looked anything but world-

and we want to end it properly."

players to seize the day for its

be all and end all. We could lose

Intriguingly, Hart wants his

It is not England's penalty- Justin Marshall, thoroughly in- again. Our tour is not over un- front and attempt to kick his class in that theatre of action. Should the tourists achieve

parity or better at the set-piece, watch out world. Given decent ball and a yard to run in, Christian Cullen, Jeff Wilson and is of far more recent vintage, for something truly memorable, is so special that it makes no I can see us winning it in two Jonah Lomu will surely fire with Australia and I had to fulenough bullets to penetrate an fill it." international know-how. Woodward will not be too

depressed if New Zealand win by 20 clear points - but Hart will be more than a little cheesed off if it is any closer.

Randell at hub, Scotland's fear, page 21 drawn the offer of those shares. Cherga-

FOOTBALL

Venables 'on brink of leaving Portsmouth'

There was confusion over a future of Terry Venables' rok Portsmouth last night after he denied rumours that he had resigned as the chairman of the First Division club. He confirmed, however, that he would be considering his future at Pompey over the weekend.

Venables, who in his capacity as the coach to the Australian national side saw them fail to qualify for the World Cup last week, failed to arrive for training at Portsmouth's Stoneham training ground yesterday and staff were told he had resigned.

It appeared last night, however, that Venables is involved in a dispute over his stake in the club with his fellow shareholder, Martin Gregory.

Venables blamed a "lack of communication" for the series of events which has seen Gregory decide not to transfer a 51 per cent shareholding in the club to the former England and Tottenham manager.

Venables was said to have withdrawn his offer to come to the financial rescue of the club, which would have meant paying staff wages from his own pockets.

Speaking on Meridian Television last night, Venables said: "As of now I'm still the chairman of the club until such time as I choose different. I expect to make a decision on my future at the club by the end of the weekend.

"The club's financial crisis was solved yesterday, you can speak to the bank and I'm sure they'll tell you that everything was solved until last night."

Talking about Gregory, Venables added: "If he is saying I'm spending too much time with Australia, he may or may not be right. But it was stressed from day one that I had a contract

English defence seriously short of physical clout, not to mention cided to resign the shares will be big. He added: "Of still be his. He added: "Of course I will still have direct con-

trol of the club." According to the Gregory Repost : family, the shares have never been registered in Venables' name, and they have now with-

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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3475. Saturday 6 December

- 20

Last Saturday's solution

D Rees

A Healey

P Grayson

K Bracken.

Leonard ...

R Cockerill

D Garforth.

M Johnson ..

G Archer...

N Back.

L Dallaglio...

Replacements: 16 1 aum. (Newcastle): 17 M Dawson

(Northampton); I8 C Sheasby (Wasps); I9 D Grewcock (Saracens); 20 K Yates (Bath); 21 M Regan (Bath).

Referee: | Fleming (Scotland)

W Greenwood.

P de Glanville...

ACROSS Aussie town in which firm's 1 Uncommonly bad opencontrolled by Conservative politician's helper (10) Apple variety from Nepal? No. Rhode Island, surpris-

ingly (9) In fact I regularly suffer reduction in interest (4) 10 Girl catching boy's infec-tion, possibly (6) 11 Erect bearing (8)

13 Having no success finding error in record book (6) 14 A clay-pit worked out? That's unusual (8) 17 Worker accepting two hair-styles should be ample? (8) 19 Vehicle in excellent condi-

tion (6) 21 City playing Celtic, exemplifying different styles? (8) 23 Where you'd have found Greek philosopher solving 25 Boast about period dress •

26 Girl's after musical instrument - not piano, wind instrument (9) 77 Expensive pieces must be

entrusted to English con-

DOWN

.Saracens 9 J Marshall...

Leicester 2 N Hewitt

Leicester 3 O Brown.

5 R Brooks

"Lextester **4 i lones**...

... Wases, capt 6 T Randell

...Saracens 8 Z Brooke

....Leicester 7 | Kronfeld

. Newczstle

.Harlequins I **M Allen** .

ing for article, agreed? It's discarded (9) The men sounded cocky Contend small child

Replacements: 16 5 McLeod (Wellington): 17 C Spencer (Auddand): 18 J Presson (Auddand): 19 C Rijechelmann (Auddand): 20 C Barrell (Taranid): 21 A Oliver (Orago).

Kick-off: 20 (5ky Sports 2)

must receive illuminated address, firstly (8) Student element required to assimilate a ssical subject (5) Woollen garment put on by a chap, originally a heart patient (7) Utensils supplied for

meal are new, specially ordered (10) Views given by German people (6) Rich, parsimonious, happy medium? (6.4) 15 Cat's-paw seen to be-have timidly? (9)

to Scramble in which man's

caught in pincer move-

ment (8) 18 A service heartless pawnbroker's first to forget (7) 20 Type of acid making ice

act unpredictably (6) servation body, sweetie-pie 22 Knitting pattern sailor left in church? (5) 24 Not charged, hence at

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' manes will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword. P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, I Canado Square, Canary Wharf, London Eld-SBL, Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: B Plaffield, Portlevent T Foster Curtis, Howeton; R Galloway, Edinburgh: D Rolls, Leicester, N Swann, Marchinette.

ON MONDAY

Since 1995 our approach to the game has changed and our fitness is better. This team is definitely the fastest and we play a far more expansive game'

Sean Fitzpatrick talks to lan Stafford about leading the All Blacks



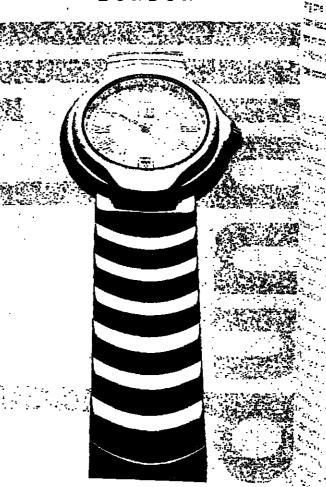
TODAY

ELEVEN PAGES OF SPORT BEGIN ON PAGE 16

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PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

YOUR MONEY

PERSONAL FINANCE, PROPERTY & MOTORING



Photomontage: Jonathan Anstee

Survive Christmas without a financial hangover

Will yours be a plastic Christmas? For millions ∴ Yof us, that's exactly how we propose to spend an estimated 10 per cent of our annual disposable income. Using credit to pay for the festivities is not necessarily a bad idea. But using the wrong card can lead to bad hangovers in the new year. Iain Morse leads us through the options.

DUNHILL

The people who run Harrods here happy this year. Punters are rolling in through the doors, tills are bleeping and spending at the checkouts is up to the limits one would expect for so famous a store. A Harrods spokesperson says: "We are out of the recession and people feel confident."

But for the rest of us, whose spending is likely to take place in far more prosaic surroundings, the festivities can lead to liquidity problems, and not just the hangover type.

Credit cards are one way of easing cashflow worries. Most of us have one and, with more than 21 million Visa cards in the UK, the indications are that our plastic friend will bear the brunt of the Christmas bills.

Royal Bank of Scotland has researched consumer behaviour over the Christmas period. At RBS, Jayne Goodwin thinks we have learned to use credit cards as a temporary source of borrowing. "We see a lot of card spending in the four weeks leading to Christmas Last year this totalled £125m, with a 30 per cear increase expected this you use the card just once each

year. In January, personal overdrafts and loans take over as customers refinance their bor-

The basic principle of card spending is simple enough. Most offer up to 57 days' interest-free credit on spending up to their limit, usually set at a minimum balance of £500.

But there are some snags, quite apart from whether you can afford to clear the balance. Securing the maximum period of interest- free credit depends on spending at just the right time. This in turn depends on when your monthly card statement is prepared. The art lies in shopping just after this date. The amount will be added to your next statement, with pav-

ment due 21 days later. So if your statements are prepared on 10 December, you will have to pay by the end of January. If your statements are dated 20 December, you can delay paying until near the middle of February. Check your last statement for the date it was prepared and shop accordingly.

But if you can't clear the whole balance by the due date, most cards from high street banks offer no interest-free credit. Instead, they charge daily on the whole amount of the balance. Late payment usually costs £10 to £12, with

The exact basis on which interest is charged may also vary. Some cards, like Bradford & Bingley's, charge from date of purchase. Others, like TSB's, from the date at which a purchase is charged to your account. A gap of two days between spending and when the charge is added is average. If

month and pay it off in full, then charging from date of purchase will add 24 days of interest to the annual cost of your card.

In exchange for notional periods of free credit, you do pay more expensive annual percentage rates (APRs), mostly between 18 and 21 per cent. Worse still, lenders add between

I and 2 per cent to this on cred-

bills, Air Miles and a plethora of special offers.

Store cards are more expensive. Aside from John Lewis, charging 18 per cent APR, most levy rates between 29 and 30 per cent. Timecard, valid at Comet, Woolworths

where spending entitles you to

loyalty points, cash off your gas

'We see a lot of card spending in the four weeks before Christmas. Last year this totalled £125m. In January, overdrafts take over'

it balances arising from cash withdrawals. Gold cards, open to those earning £20,000 or more, charge on average 1 per cent less than standard versions. There is often a cost attached to having a card in the first place, but if you have one already, this won't affect your

spending either way. Nat West top at £20. Cover is all risk, but includes a clause stating "unless the item

is otherwise insured", in which case you can't claim. voucher worth £2.50.

Many cards offer extra "free" benefits; loyalty points, travel insurance and purchase protection. For instance, Alliance & Leicester offers cover against loss, theft or accidental damage for 100 days on purchase values between £50 and £5,000.

Loyalty points are also on offer from card providers. Spend £250 with Sainsbury's Reward Card and you accumulate points enough for a store

Using credit cards allows

and B&Q, comes top with a rate of 31.90 per cent. There are alternatives. New bank cards such as Royal Bank of Scotland's Advanta, are now being launched with discounted rates. Advanta's APR is just 9.9 per cent, but only until July next year, when it goes up to 18.55 per cent, giving you six months to pay for Christmas presents

at an attractive rate. Elsewhere, the Co-operative Bank offers its Advantage Visa card with a discounted APR of 7.9 per cent until April, when rates go up to 10.9 per cent. This is cheap borrowing. but there is no interest-free pe-

According to the Co-op's Dave Smith: "We've segmented the market and aim for those who want to use a card as a continuous source of credit." The card is open to non-account holders at the Co-op.

Personal overdrafts charge equivalent annual rates (EARs)

on outstanding balances. The the "double-dipping" option. best deal comes from Alliance & Leicester at 9.5 per cent, but most cost 15 per cent or more. with Clydesdale and RBS coming top at 19.56 per cent. Monthly arrangement fees of around £10 will usually be added. To get the best deal you have to switch banks, and it may be too late in the day to do it

for this Christmas. Unsecured loans are another option, but care is needed. As a general rule, the shorter the term and the smaller the amount borrowed, the higher the APR. This will be fixed at outset, with monthly repayments combining interest and capital.

If early redemption of the loan is planned, expect to be penalised with an excess charge of two months' interest.

On loans of £500 over six months, expect to pay not less than 16.9 per cent from Midland and as much as 25.8 per cent from Yorkshire Bank.

Some lenders also offer flexible loans with no minimum repayment period and lump sum repayment facilities.

Clydesdale Bank is competitive with an EAR of 19.2 per cent on loans between £500 and £5.000, repayments on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis and no early redemption penalty. Drawbacks include a £35 arrangement fee and minimum £100 drawdown, but if you want the early redemption option, this is good value.

If in doubt about whether you can afford Christmas, apply the Scrooge test: which is worse, being in debt, or not spending at all? And rememher, he only had to deal with the Ghost of Christmas Past.

Best borrowing deals - a Christmas selection

Cards

Co-Operative Bank Advantage Visa offers 7.9% APR until 31 March 1998, then 10.9%. Phone 0800 109000

RBS Advanta offers 9.90% APR until 1 July 1998, then 17.9%. Phone 0800 077770

Loans (£500 over six months) Midland Bank (unsecured) 19.9% APR. Phone 0800 180180

Clydesdale Bank (flexible) 19.2% EAR. Phone 0800 240024

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INSIDE 3/NIC CICUTTI ISAs in all their glory SMONATHAN DAVIS Stocking fillers

7/RODDY KOHN Motorway madness 9/FELICITY CANNELL New Monopoly board

Break for the border Hot car speculators burnt

ISAs won't benefit the poor

NIC CICUTTI

Call me an old-fashioned lefty if you must, but I've always been in favour of wealth redistribution. The idea that the better-off in society should help out the less fortunate appeals to me.

So why is it that when I heard Geoffrey Robinson. the Government's Paymaster General, saying the Individ-ual Savings Account (ISA) will "benefit the many, not the few". I reached for the

Proposals for the ISA were announced this week at a fractious press conference, in which Mr Robinson attempted to justify the £50,000 lifetime cap on tax-free savings into the new account.

It wasn't just the sight of Labour's richest minister, one apparently skilled in the black art of tax avoidance, telling me about ISAs which had me gagging. It was the assumption that we would buy the Government's line. This was the claim that its

proposals would hit only a tiny minority of the really wealthy, those with £50,000 or more held in PEPs and Tessas by April 1999.

Now, of course, wealth is relative. If you are unemployed, £50,000 is one heck of a lot of money. But for many hundreds of

thousands of people, this is simply the amount they have accumulated over the years in the hope that it will help them when they retire. They are the ones who will

be hit by the ISA proposals, not the super-rich, people like Mr Robinson, who will always find ways of dodging taxes on their assets. I can already hear plain-

tive questions: "But what out the worse off? Won't they benefit from the ISA?" Again, benefits are relative.

Yes, millions will potentially benefit. If you are saving money in a building society account, placing it into an ISA instead will earn you more. The ISA will mean banks and building societies offering

tax-free savings accounts into which millions of people will transfer up to £1,000 a year. Then again, most lower-paid

people could never afford to

save even a fraction of that

Moreover, the annual cash limit of £1,000 into ISAs is important. It suggests that the Government has another purpose. It is that of capping the amount of tax foregone on savings schemes by the Inland Revenue to an annual limit of £1.5bn or

thereabouts.

As for encouraging more people to save, I don't buy a word of it. Imagine the scene. You are at the Tesco checkout and in your hand you have the £5 change from your weekly shop. To the left is the ISA desk, where you are in with a chance to take part in a lottery that will win 50 people a prize of £1,000 each month. To the right is the National Lottery till, where you are in with a chance of £5m or £10m. Even a supposedly serious personal finance ed-

which way most of us will turn. The reality is that the ISA is a shabby way of taxing a swathe of hapless individuals who made the mistake of taking at its word a previous government's tax pledges.

itor such as myself can guess

Most people who have invested in PEPs and Tessas in the past 10 years are middle class. They aspire to a better future and are prepared to make sacrifices. Their "bargain", if that's the right word, would have meant setting aside more money over 20 or 30 years in order to reach their financial goals.

We may be scornful of their propensity to save, even that have allowed them to do so. But we should also feel contempt for a Government which uses class war language to justify extra taxes on them, when the richest and most powerful people in our society will, as always, get off MONEY MAKEOVER

If you have cash, it's best to spread it around

Name: Luanne Reed Age: 25

Occupation: Sales and marketing manager for a fashion соппрану.

The problem: Luanne, who is single and has no dependents. earns £20,000 and has hopes of future salary increases with her company. She has £22,000 in a Barclays Bank High Interest Account, £14,000 of which she recently inherited.

She expects to buy a flat although she does not know how much money she will need for this. She might let a room out to a lodger. Luanne does not wish to commit all her capital on the purchase and would like have some funds left to invest for the longer term.

Her employment contract entitles Luanne to sick pay cover of 10 days a year. She is not eligible to join her company pension scheme as it is only available to directors in the firm, but believes she is in a position to make contributions of £150 per month into a scheme. The adviser: Edward Creasev, client manager at Clark Conway, independent financial advisers, 26 Durham Road. London SW20 0TW (0181-241

The advice: Flexibility is the key to any advice in this case and therefore I would suggest a split of her capital in the following

I would recommend keeping £10,000 in a postal account due to the generally higher rates of return these offer over normal bank and building society accounts. One point worth noting is the relatively little difference in interest rates for 30day, 90-day and instant access accounts of this type. On this basis, an instant access postal

account would seem most ap-

propriate. When the ideal property is found, capital would then be accessible. The most competitive account at present is offered by Coventry Building Society. which pays 7.10 per cent gross on deposits.

There are one or two accounts offering slightly higher rates but they require a higher balance to be maintained which may not suit Luanne.

I would advise that £9,000 of Luanne's capital is invested for the medium to long term in tax-efficient investments such as Tessas and PEPs. We need to keep in mind that PEPs and Tessas will be subject to changes

Both products will be transferable into Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), subject to a £50,000 top limit.

At present the stock market remains volatile so I would suggest looking at a PEP with a "phasing-in" option. This type of PEP has the ability to spread the investment of £6,000 over a six-month period, so avoiding the commitment of the capital to the market at an inopportune moment. Fidelity is one company

which offers this option along with a wide range of good performing funds. I would recommend that she also considers a Tessa. One of the top interestpaying providers is Principality Building Society, with a rate of 7.65 per cent paid gross providing the investment is left for a full five years. As an alternative. Luanne could consider a fixed interest rate Tessa. One of the best rates available is offered by Birmingham Midshires at 7.05 per cent.

The remaining balance of



Luanne Reed should protect her income

policies. She is young and her capital can be kept in an instant-access account for imhealthy so the cover should be relatively cheap. mediate day-to-day use.

As well as considering Luanne's capital position, thought also needs to be given to proteeting her income now and when she retires. She should consider the merits of critical illness and income protection

There is often confusion over the differences between critical illness (C1) cover, which pays out a lump sum on the diagnosis of one of a list of critical conditions, including strokes, cancer and heart at-

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

tacks, and permanent health insurance (PHI), which provides a regular income in the event of ongoing ill health, probably a more pressing need at pre-

There is a wide choice of companies offering cover. Care should be taken when choosing a provider as terms and premium conditions vary consid. erably.

If Luanne is unable to join her company pension scheme for some time, I would recom! mend a personal pension plan is started sooner rather than later. Delaying the start of a pension can have a substantial negative effect on the benefits received in retirement.

Any contribution she makes would benefit from tax relief at. her marginal rate, currently 23 per cent, which means that for every £77 she pays in, the taxman will add a further £23 to her pension.

The Government has indicated that it will soon be announcing details of its new stakeholder pension and Luanne may wish to wait for these developments before committing herself. Whenever she decides to start a pension, in believe she should include waive er of premium benefit in her contract, whereby pension premiums are paid by the insurer in the event she is unable to work due to ill health.

Luanne should look to increase her pension contributions each year in line with inflation, if funds allow. She though she is single and has no immediate dependents, a will is the best way of ensuring her the best way of ensuring her wishes are met.

As a final thought, Luanne mentioned the possibility that if she buys a house she may wish to let out one of the rooms.

Let's hope next March's Budget does not change renta-room allowances, which allow someone in her position to receive an annual income of up great it: to £4,250 a year tax free.

Such an income can often be the deciding factor when purchasing a first property.

UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT/GUINNESS FLIGHT GLOBAL SMALLER COMPANIES FUND

Global Smaller Companies

The deal: The fund, an openended investment company (OEIC), is managed in Guernsey. Its aim is to achieve capital growth by investing mainly in small companies. It aims to take advantage of

show promise of substantial outperformance.

The fund, together with its sibling, the Guinness Flight European Smaller Companies Fund, is a sub-fund operating under an umbrella arrangement. This means that it may be possible to switch out of one world-wide opportunities for fund into another within the

Flight without incurring capital gains taxes.

Minimum monthly investments are £150, or £2,000 for lump sum contributions, with further lump sums accepted over £500. Payments can be made in US dollars, German marks or Swiss francs.

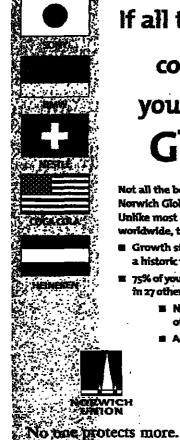
Charges involve a bid-offer

also an annual management fee of 1 per cent. Fees and expenses are charged to income where possible. There may also be ad-

ditional expenses. Plus points: Guinness Flight argues that over the past few years larger companies have delivered excellent returns to investors, who have tended to

parts. As a result, small companies have underperformed. But the time is right for this situation to be reversed and smaller companies should outperform in the coming period. If so, this fund will deliver above-average performance. Potential risks: While Guinness expects to use its own research

It will rely heavily on HSBC James Capel's own small companies database, which means that, to an extent, you have fund management at one remove. The verdict: Guinness Flight has an excellent reputation as a fund manager, but this is one for people prepared to take a risk. Marks out of five: Three.



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BARGAIN BASEMENT

Birmingham Midshires is raising interest rates paid on its savings accounts by an average of 0.25 per cent. The increase brings its SmartStart children's account to a rate of 7.5 per cent gross on savings of £500 or more. The Quantum Instant Plus Account, where returns are linked to transactions made, will rise by an average of 0.28 per cent, with a top rate of 6.25 per cent on balances above £50,000. First Instant Access, the postal account, rises by 0.29 per cent. Details from branches.

Portman Building Society is launching an annual travel insurance scheme for families, costing £99. The scheme offers cover for family holidays, winter sports and business travel and includes European motoring assistance. Individual cover on the same terms costs £67 a year. Call 0870 6061212 for details.

Fleming Investment Trust Management is offcring investors a discount of 40 per cent on the fees normally charged if they were to sell their Railtrack shares and reinvest the proceeds in one of the company's 19 investment trusts. The offer means a charge of £7.50 on dealing CISIS, down from £12.50, until 31 December, If more than one family member offers shares for exchange, the fee will remain the same. Call 0500 500161.

The Share Centre, the retail stockbroker, is offering buyers of shares in publicly quoted football clubs a dealing commission of 1 per cent on purchase, subject to a £2.50 minimum. Buyers will be sent a "gift certificate" in the name of the person receiving the gift. Call 0800 800008.

Yorkshire Bank is offering a

one-year fixed-term deposit account, Premium Term Bond, paying tiered rates of up to 7.55 per cent gross on deposits above £45,000. Minimum deposits of £2,000 will earn 7 per cent gross. Call 0113 2472410. Paws, the pet insurance service, has added two new ben-

efits to its cover for cats and dogs and for crossbreed pets. The provider now offers personal accident cover of up to £250 in cash benefits if an owner has to take time off work after being bitten while caring for the pet following accident or illness. Paws now also offers a vet helpline. Bereavement counsellors will be available if a pet dies. Call 0121 6267891.

Pearl, the insurer, is offering free breakdown cover to drivers who take out its Drivewise Gold motor insurance. In addition to standard cover, Drivewise Gold also offers protection in Europe, including up to one hour's free roadside labour, free transport to a policyholder's destination, alternative overnight accommodation if the car cannot be repaired that day, a message service to friends or family and a 24hour helpline. Call 0645

around



ISAs won't encourage more people to save

The Government's proposals for a new taxfree Individual Savings Account (ISA) to replace **PEPs and Tessas were** unveiled this week. ISAs have been heraided as Labour's mechanism for promoting a greater savings culture among the less well-off in our society. Nic Cicutti looks at what they mean and how you can maximise the options available to you.

What are ISAs?

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The Individual Savings Account is the replacement for personal equity plans (PEPs) and tax-exempt savings schemes (Tessas). It will be introduced in April 1999. As with PEPs, income paid from the ISA will be tax free.

Gains on investments inside the ISA will also be tax free. allowing your capital to accumulate. In addition, the Goverument is proposing to pay a 10 per cent tax credit on dividends from UK equities for the first five years of the scheme.

How does the ISA compare with a PEP?

At present, you can invest up to £6,000 a year in a general PEP, which can include corporate bonds. Additionally, you may invest £3,000 in the shares of a single company. Other than the annual allowance, there is no

upper limit on PEP investments.

Tessas allow a maximum investment of £9,000 over five tucked away in the first year, £1,800 in years two, three and They allow withdrawals with loss of tax benefits. Follow-on Tessas, which began to be offered

unvestment of £3,000 a year This can be a mixture of cash, shares and even insurance poli-

cies (see below). There is no minimum, unlike most PEPs, which demand regular savings of at least £25 a month. The Government expects that supermarkets and similar outlets will be prepared to set up ISA accounts into which even a few pounds can be

funds I can stash in an ISA? Unlike PEPs, there will be a cap of £50,000 on the amount that

without time limit: if it takes 20 years to reach that amount, fine. four, and £600 in the final year. Or if starting from scratch, you can do it in 10 years. What else is different? in 1996, allow a maximum in- Again, unlike PEPs, you will be cicties and supermarkets, will be vestment in year one of £9,000. allowed to place up to £1,000 of

ISAs will allow a maximum that £5,000 annual allowance ISA providers. The Governinto a cash denosit account, with instant access. Withdrawals will not mean loss of tax incentives.

It will also be possible for up to £1,000 of the ISA's annual allowance to be in the guise of an insurance policy, so that they too enjoy tax-free benefits. This is aimed at friendly societies.

What will happen to PEPs when the ISA comes in? It will be possible to transfer all

Is there an upper limit on your PEP holdings into the The consultative document im- in equity prices over that periwhich this is expected to happen is between 6 April and 6 Octoyears, £3,000 of which can be can be placed in ISAs. This is ber 1999. Transfers are subject to the £50,000 upper ceiling.

Will transfers be easy?

The details have not been worked out. But PEP providers, together with banks, building soexpected to apply to become ment believes they will want to

effect transfers for free. The theory is that, as with PEPs, providers notify the Inland Revenue of subscriptions made. Investors will not be required to declare income or capital gains arising from ISAs on their tax returns.

What happens if I do not transfer my PEPs into the ISA hefore the transitional period ends?

ISA. The transitional period in plies you will be subject to tax od. Of course, couples would be on capital gains from the April cut-off point. Income from a PEP will also be taxed at your marginal rate.

able to use a double allowance.

Should I still invest in PEPs?

Yes, especially if you are a

higher-rate taxpayer. Tax ex-

emptions will apply between

now and April 1999, including

dividends paid in this period and

you will be able to transfer into

The Government says you keep

your Tessa to the end of its five-

year life. Thereafter, you can

can transfer the capital from it

into the ISA, but not the inter-

est, subject to the £50,000 cap,

Will I be able to keep on pay-

ing into the Tessa after April

We don't know. If you start one

now, you will be able to put in

up to £4.800 before April 1999.

One potential problem is that

only £1,000 of each year's con-

tributions can be held in eash.

This appears to suggest that

most Tessa holders won't be able

to keep all their funds in cash

Will ISAs encourage a greater

h's doubtful. Generally, saving

money requires a surplus of in-

come over expenditure. Telling

someone they will get an extra

£5 a year (compound) if they

save £30 a month for a year is

unlikely to be enticing if they

don't know where to find the

money for their gas bill.

after transfer.

"savings culture"?

What about Tessas?

What happens if I have more than £50,000 invested in PEPs? Sorry, the most you can shift into the ISA is £50,000. The rest probably will be subject to tax the ISA, subject to the limit. from April 1999.

mortgage? Lenders calculate that regular premiums of about £160 a month into a PEP/ISA (equivalent to the £50,000 limit over 25 years) will be worth £125,000 at maturity, assuming growth rates of 9 per cent.

This may prove insufficient for homes in London and the South-east of England and takes no account of sharp falls

speedier capital repayments. At the same time, sums repaid over and above this amount go into a "parallel account". This pays interest at the vari-

transferring the interest from your Tessa) until you have built up enough funds to pay off the loan, you will continue to earn 7.95 per cent net of tax, equivalent to 12.72 per cent gross for higher rate taxpayers, or 9.77 per cent for those on basic rate tax.

INTERNET INVESTOR



bargain with car insurance

robin amlõt

There is something about buying motor insurance which tends to bring out a reaction in many people remarkably similar to that occasioned by sitting in a dentist's chair with the drill being revved up next to them. If you really cannot face going to see a broker or an agent to sort out your insurance, you can always check out what is

available on the web. Using an on-line insurance provider, you can make your own insurance decisions when it suits you, a principle already accepted by the financial services industry in what marketing insiders call the Martini business model customers increasingly want to do business "any time, any place, anywhere".

In theory at least, we may reasonably expect the savings thus made to be passed on to us in the shape of more competitive insurance quotations.

Several insurance providers and insurance brokers have websites which offer you a form to fill in. In return, they will, in most cases, email you an insurance quotation.

At present, a significantly small number of websites offer a full on-line service. In fact, there are only two: Eagle Star Direct, the on-line arm of an established telesales operation, and Screentrade, a new on-line insurance brokerage, quoting premiums from a range of insurers.

Eagle Star Direct was set up in 1989 and has had a presence on the web since 1995. It claims to offer savings of 15 per cent for people who pay via the website.

Screentrade Motor offers quotations from a panel of eight insurers: AGF, Bishopsgate, Folgate, GAN, ITT London & Edinburgh, Norwich Union, Royal & Sun Alliance, and Zurich. The site will offer home and contents

Drive a hard

cover in early 1998. Screentrade also hopes to add more companies to its panel of insurers.

To insure a car through Screentrade, you access the site and complete the on-line form. Once you have filled in your details and submitted the form, the system returns a list of quotes from which you may make a selection. Alternatively, you can resubmit the form, altering the details in order to reduce the premiums offered by increasing the excess you are prepared to pay or by reducing the number of insured drivers.

If you need to exit Screentrade, you can return up to one week later and not have to re-enter your requirements, providing you have made a note of your session reference number.

This can be useful if you need to exit the website to check the details of your car. or your insurance policy, for example.

Both Eagle Star Direct and Screentrade will accept payment via credit or debit card. Cover takes effect once the card transaction is confirmed and your insurance documentation is mailed out the following working day.

Eagle Star Direct: www.eaglestardirect.co.uk Sereentrade: www.screentrade.com

Make the most of the Tessa loophole that has opened

As with all new savings environments, the ISA will both remove opportunities to maximise your income or capital and open up fresh ones.

Perhaps the most significant one is the loophole that appears to have opened up on the Tessa front. As the main piece describes, it will be possible to keep Tessas to the end of their five-year life, beyond the April 1999 start-up date for ISAs.

At maturity, you shift the money into the ISA, subject to the £50,000 limit. Unfortunately, it is not yet clear whether payments into the Tessa will be allowed to terest is calculated daily, allowing for continue beyond then. But even the £4,800 maximum that can be invested be-

fore then should mature into a tidy sum. The Government's consultative document implies that transferring interest from the Tessa into the ISA will not be possible. Here, it may be possible to make

use of several flexible mortgage products. Take the Legal & General Flexible Reserve mortgage. It currently charges a variable rate of 7.95 per cent. You agree a monthly mortgage payment on which in-

able rate charged on the mortgage itself.

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TORA

Little thought has gone into the logic behind **Individual Savings Accounts**

there are times when I won- ISAs. According to the conthrough the consequences will be a 10 per cent tax adof planned legislation. We vantage in holding shares now have a pretty good idea this way and money on deof the shape Individual Sav- posit will not be taxed. ings Accounts (ISAs) will take. ISAs should be more Yet by limiting the amount of money that can be contributed, the Government is effectively penalising thrift.

Paying for a savings ining the amount of tax saved by the better-off so benefits can be handed back to those who might not otherwise save singularly successful inis very laudable. But there is vestors. no evidence that ISAs will endo not presently put money by for a rainy day.

which may not be as trans- ket checkouts. parent as PEPs and Tessas middle classes could find

pay off mortgages greater in mechanism already in place. please. What will happen to them?

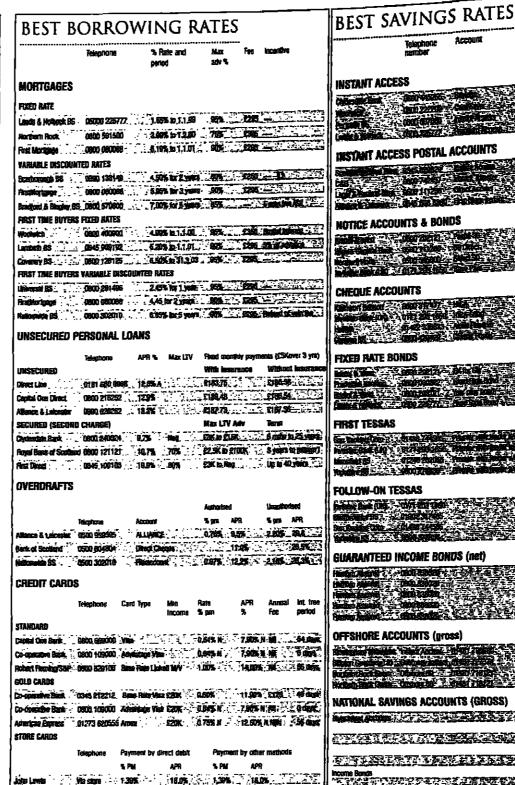
Far be it for me to carp, but any real incentive to use der if this Government thinks sultative document, there

Assuming £5,000 is invested, the income might be encompassing and flexible expected to be £200 a year. than existing savings vehicles. so there is £20 of tax to be saved. If the management charge for an ISA is more than 0.4 per cent, there is no benefit. Well, capital gains tax will be sheltered. But who centive such as this by reduc- really pays capitals gains tax anyway? The current allowance takes care of all but the very seasoned or

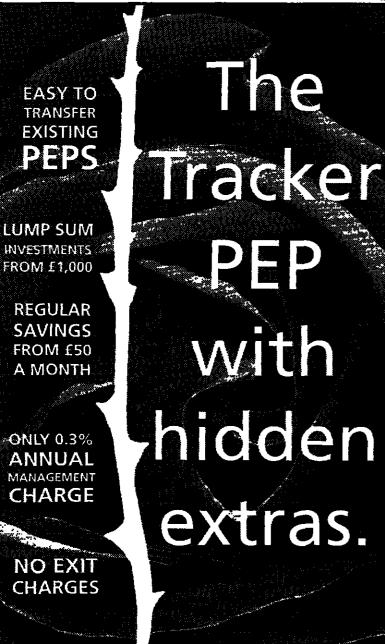
Instant accessibility is an courage savings by those who advantage, but I am not sure instant investability is. Stories of multiple PEP applications Moreover, by pitching the already abound, particularly ceiling at a level as low as as a result of windfall shares. £50,000, they run the risk of Expect confusion over ISAs chasing the very rich into as people buy more than other areas of tax avoidance one each year at supermar-

On balance, I am in symand which will certainly not pathy with the Government's benefit the Exchequer. The aim to make available a savings product that is univerthere is not enough of a sally acceptable. ISAs may cushion to relieve the state of work, but I doubt it. Quite the burden of looking after what incentive has to be offered to those who might oth-Now you may think I am erwise spend the money on being over-critical, but pon- lottery tickets or the 2.30 at der a while. There are a Romford eludes me, but failnumber of PEP savers who ing to incentivise the less have nothing like £50,000 well-off is no excuse for discommitted, but intended to couraging thrifty existing savers. Nice try Gordon. A value through the savings little more thought next time,

They will have to make other Brian Tora is chairman of the Greig Middleton investment Then there is the lack of strategy committee.



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28

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Some light reading for the festive season

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The consequences of the great crash in the Japanese stock market are still being felt

Photograph: Reuters

This has not been a vintage year for published insights into the art of stock market investment. There has been nothing published in the past 12 months, for example, to match the rich insights of Against The Gods, Peter Bernstein's fascinating history of risk, in the previous year.

Nor has there been such a comprehensive analysis of successful investment techniques as What Works on Wall Street, by James O'Shaughnessy, another remarkable title which appeared in 1996. However the past year has not been without its highlights and for those who like to pack their Christmas stockings with useful reading about the riches which they hope the new year may bring. it is not difficult to put together a list of reading matter.

First mention has, however, to go to an extraordinary book by the New York trader Victor Niederhoffer. Education of a Speculator (published by John Wiley) chronicles the life and thoughts of a man who went on from a career as an academic and champion squash player to become the high-profile professional tradli-known investors.

Alas for poor Niederhoffer, who is no blushing violet, his hedge fund was wiped out a few weeks ago when he punted most of its money in a disastrous bet on the Thai stock market and he became the biggest single casualty of this year's rout in Asian markets.

No such fate awaits Warren

Buffett. There have been so many books about Buffett's extraordinary success as a stock market investor that the market for such books is in danger of becoming overbought. Roger Lowenstein's biography Buffett (Weidenfeld & Nicolson) throws a lot of light on the character of a man who is now almost as famous for his homespun aphorisms as he is for the prowess which has made him the second wealthiest individual in the United States behind Bill Gates of Microsoft.

But there are also plenty of gems still to be found in Warren Buffett Speaks (John Wiley) an anthology of the great man's wit and wisdom. Two quick examples from many on the value of stockbroker advice: "Never ask the barber if you need a haircut." On the merits of simple businesses as er, whose clients numbered a place to put your money: George Soros and several oth- "You should invest in a business that even a fool can run

because some day a fool will." published in 1978 and reissued There are interesting anecas one of Wiley's Investment dotes and some fascinating Classics series. bistorical detail in a new his-The book has an interest-

story of how a shrewd white-

haired lady has taken to play-

ing the markets from her home.

and Picking The Right Unit

Trust by Bruce McWilliams

(FT Pitman Books), a guide to

the techniques you need to find

the most consistent performers

anniversary of the 1987 stock

market crash, and with it have

memorate this and the great

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still nothing to beat the account

by Charles Kindleberger, Ma-

Panics and Croshes

This year has seen the 10th

in the unit trust sector.

ing section on the great crash tory of the investment trust industry by John Newlands, Put in the Japanese stock market Not Your Trust in Money, pubsince 1989. The consequences lished by the Association of Inof that crash itself are still bevestment Trusts. The book is ing felt today, as the malaise a useful reminder that there is in Asian markets underlines. nothing new about the phe- It is an open question whether nomenon of widening disor not the Japanese political counts which we have seen system can adapt sufficiently over the past couple of years. well to prevent its severe dose I am not a great fan of "how of debt deflation spilling over to" books but two which I into a wide-reaching economic thought were a cut above the crisis for the rest of the world. average this year were Bernice That issue will be one of the crucial tests of how the stock Cohen's Armchair Investor, the

> markets perform in 1998. Finally, one oddity brought to my attention by a reader of The Independent, which may appeal to number-crunchers. The Science of Winning, by Burton P Fabricand, is a detailed handbook on how to apply the techniques of betting on the horses to beating the stock market averages.

The author believes that come a host of titles to comshare prices follow a random walk, but argues that it is possible to study the odds and For insights into how market make profits from backing companies which have recrashes occur, and why, there's ported earnings increases that are materially higher than the market has been expecting.

UNDERSTANDING THE STOCK MARKET

Dorothy Parker, the American writer, once remarked: "Two of the most beautiful words in the English language are 'cheque enclosed'." In the latest in our series on the stock market, John Andrew discusses how to make these magic words appear before our eyes on a regular, and

Shareholders are part owners of a company. Should all go well, they will receive a share of their company's profits, known as dividends, usually twice a year. However, companies do not pay out all of their

generous, basis.

profits to their shareholders. A proportion is retained to plough back into the business. Technically, undistributed profits are "transferred to reserves" in years when the profits are not as good, so the company can pay dividends from reserves.

When a company prospers, shareholders' rewards are twofold. In addition to receiving a regular income, they will also hopefully see their shares increase in value.

This is because the profits retained in the business will be put to good use. In turn, this should increase earnings and therefore the value of the business. The result to the shareholder will hopefully be an increasing share price, with dividends rising each year.

This sounds ideal - in theory. However, if you look at The Independent's shares page, you will notice that returns are generally low.

High returns are usually associated with riskier shares. The yield column on the page expresses the last gross annual dividend as a percentage of the current share price. It is the exception rather than the rule to find a gross yield above 5 per cent ~ most produce less. ho are se

income from their shares will terest unit trust.

no doubt be disappointed, as they can generally secure higher returns from simple savings accounts.

Naturally everyone needs a contingency level of savings which provide instant access.

It is also true that higher remins can be obtained from notice or fixed-term accounts. However, maximising shortterm returns with savings accounts can be to the detriment of future income.

It is essential for every investor to have a comfort level of savings.

It is equally important for those who will be relying on investment income to consider taking steps to ensure that their income increases over time, even if this means forgoing income in the early years.

This may not be a route that everyone is able, or indeed would wish, to take. It requires planning and professional guid-

Ideally, in addition to funds in instant access and term accounts, consideration should be given to securing a guaranteed level of income.

This may be achieved by investing in gilts, which are Goverament securities. These were the subject of this column last month when it was explained that when the current price for a dated gilt is more than £100, it means that the investor will make a loss when the security is redeemed.

Although such gilts pay a high dividend, it must be understood that a proportion of the income paid every year is effectively capital.

When investing for income, the advice is usually that 40 to 50 per cent of a portfolio should be in securities producing a fixed level of income.

If contemplating investing in gilts, professional advice should be sought from a stockbroker or independent financial adviser (IFA).

However, ordinary gilts do not give protection against inflation. An alternative course would be to invest in a fixed in-

John Hutton-Attenborough, of IFA Berry Birch & Noble, says it may be worth contemplating the Commercial Union Income Unit Trust which currently yields an income of 7.6 per cent.

This need not be to the detriment of the invested capital. Over the past 12 months, a £1,000 investment would now be worth £1,177 if dividends had been invested. Over five years £1,000 would have risen to £1.780, which is an annual growth rate of 12.2 per cent.

In effect, the fund has grown by a considerable amount more than the amount paid in income over the years.

So as to spread the risk, any shares portfolio should contain at least six holdings spread

across different sectors. In order to absorb the cost of buying and selling the shares, the minimum economic holding per share is

around £2,000. This may not be affordable by more modest investors. However, there is a solution unit trusts which invest in a mixture of fixed income stocks

and shares. Mr Hutton-Attenborough says the Jupiter Income Unit Trust is well worth considering. With income reinvested, the return over the past year has been 21.6 per cent and an annual equivalent of 27.5 per cent

over the past five years. However, the dividend yield is only 3.7 per cent. This means that £1,000 invested a year ago would have produced an income of just £37.

At the same time, £1,000 invested five years ago would now produce an annual income of £124.51, which is equivalent of 12.45 per cent gross.

This emphasises the fact that that when investing in the stock market for income, one should take a longer-term view and be willing to sacrifice a low initial income for higher dividends later.

Readers contemplating investing in the stock market for seek professional advice.

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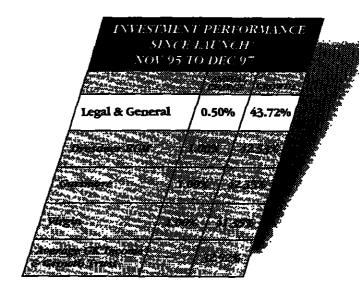
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April 1987 The terms and imms for converting an existing PEP into an ISA are being considered as part of the cr an 2000mt Reported office Temple Court II Queen Victoria Street, London, ECAN 4TP, Representative only of t

Talking to an independent adviser is often presented as the sole option for those of us with a range of financial needs. But in some cases, salespeople who are only able to advise on their company's products can be an acceptable alternative. Simon Read dons his cricket pads to tell us the score.

If Yorkshire County Cricket Club hadn't relaxed its eligibility rules, it's fairly unlikely that the team would have remained a force in county cricket. Until relatively recently, players had to be Yorkshire-born to play for the county. So while other teams picked from the best in the world, Yorkshire was limited to its own.

The practice was clearly nonsense. In much the same way, comparing a tied agent to an independent financial adviser (IFA) could be said to be nonsense. From one you'll be offered a choice of the best products across the market while the other will only be able to offer you products from his or her own company.

Yet many tied agents are very successful, Why? Partly because we're all lazy

and partly because many tied agents are agents in the country. "Our agents offer good at their job and offer decent advice.

The problem with tied agents lies not necessarily with the salesmen themselves, but with their limited product range. When it comes to looking at an individual's situation and recommending a course of action, both an IFA and a tied agent could end up with the same answer.

The difference is that an IFA will recommend the best pension, PEP, or whatever from across the whole market while a tied agent will be limited to offering his or her own company's product, whether it's any good or not.

"I think that, in all morality, somebody should not be allowed to sell to the public unless they can offer a range of good products," says IFA Alastair Conway, managing director of Clark Conway. The idea that people feel they are getting good advice from a tied agent is wrong.

This view is typical of most IFAs. They are fiercely proud of their independent status and it is clearly galling for them to see so many people buy financial products through a tied agent. Worse is the danger that, by choosing a tied agent, people end up with the wrong products.

Yet this view is disputed by companies that use salespeople. Allied Dunbar runs one of the most successful networks of tied

good professional advice," says an Allied Dunbar spokesman. "We spend a great deal of time and money training them properly, above and beyond the standards set by the industry. Additionally, our agents have the ability to offer the best possible service, in terms of ease of access and client servicing. They deal with one system which they understand very well, and so can spend more time meeting clients' needs."

Large insurance companies also offer unique confidence and security, according to Allied Dunbar. "We offer a guarantee that if one of our advisers has offered the wrong product or wrong advice, we'll offer compensation and put the client back in the right position. IFAs may not have the backing to do that."

When it comes to products, most insurance companies offer much the same these days, claims Allied Dunhar. Therefore it doesn't matter so much which product you buy - what matters is the advice you get. This is a debatable point. If a tied agent cannot actually offer the best product for a particular customer, it is unlikely that he or she will admit that and tell a customer to go elsewhere.

In reality, the tied agent is more likely to make the foot fit the shoe, rather than the other way round.



Salespeople have limited scope, like Yorkshire did before it relaxed its eligibility rules Photograph: David Ashdown

Don't neglect the most important aspect of your portfolio

With shares in around 1,800 companies quoted on the main stock market alone, it is no wonder many investors want an adviser to help them choose a portfolio. Trouble is, finding a stockbroker is often as timeconsuming as selecting individual shares. But, David Prosser writes, it is worth making the effort.

Several hundred brokers offer investment advice in the UK. Unfortunately, there is no perfect route to finding the ideal one there are steps you can take to avoid ending up with an unsuitable adviser.

The first is to decide how much advice you need. For a basic service, you need an advisory stockbroker, who will expect you to approach him with ideas for deals. He or she will execute deals on your behalf but will also tell you whether he thinks potential trades are a good idea. Advisory brokers can also offer views on the general outlook for the stock market.

Some investors are happy with an advisory broker who divulges his opinions over the telephone. One firm, The Share Centre (01442 890800), even has a premium rate telephone service that you can call for to meet your needs. Sometimes, it can be advice on individual stocks. You then pay you're looking for a stockbroker who offers ask friends and relatives.

however, prefer more of a personal service.

The next rung up the ladder in advice terms is to ask a portfolio manager to make your dealing decisions. Advisory portfolio managers won't deal without asking your opinion first while discretionary portfolio managers take your money and tell you every so often what stocks they have bought on your behalf and how they're doing.

The more advice you need, the more you will have to pay. Portfolio managers, for instance, levy a fee at least once a year. Advisory brokers take a commission each

time you deal. Clearly, charges matter. High fees will eat into your returns quickly. However, if

a matter of trial and error. Nevertheless, very low dealing charges. Other investors. advice, the quality of that advice is more important than the charges the broker levies.

Once you've selected the type of broker that you need, start looking for an individual firm. Apcims, the private client stockbrokers' association, is a handy starting point. It publishes a list of all its member brokers in the UK, with information on the services they offer. "This is a fairly comprehensive document," says Sarah McGuffick of Apcims. The guide, which is free, also gives a geographical breakdown of brokers in your area.

With the help of the association, you should be able to identify a number of potentially suitable local stockbrokers. A good way to narrow down the field further is to

Then try to compile a shortlist of candidates, using the guide to check that they offer any specialist services you require. Do not feel you have to sign up with the first stockbroker you meet. It makes sense to visit four or five firms. The key is to find

a broker with whom you feel comfortable. When you visit brokers, ask about their experience with clients who have similar sums of money to invest as you. A broker should be able to give you an objective indication of how clients have fared with

It's also important to check on the resources that brokers have available. A very small firm won't necessarily fluff your investments, but a broker who has access to more research materials has an obvious

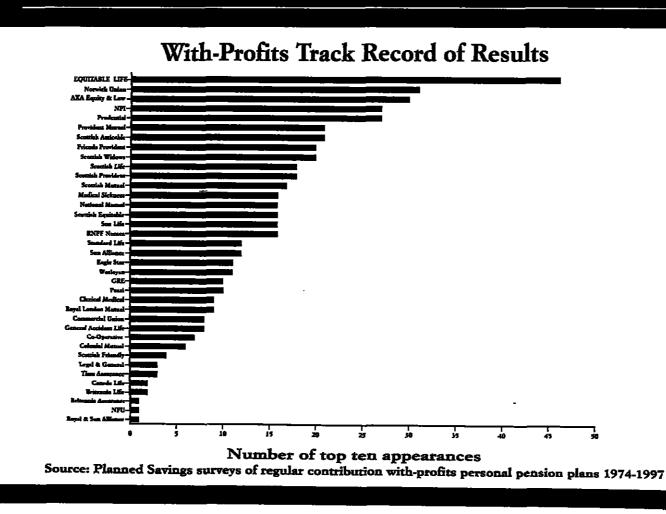
head start. In addition, ask about the qualifications of anyone who will be advising. you and the level of professional indemnity insurance they carry.

Finally, when you find a broker you like, make sure that he or she understands your aims very clearly. Your aims should be reflected in a client agreement letter.

It is possible that even if you're very careful about finding a broker you may end up dissatisfied. If this should happen, talk through your concerns with the broker and give the firm time to improve. Equally though, remember that you can change brokers whenever you like.

Apcims, 112 Middlesex Street, London EH1 7HY (0171-247 7080).

CHOOSE YOUR PENSION FROM?



Many people put good investment performance high on their list of priorities when choosing a pension plan. Making sense of competing claims can, however, be a difficult business.

Well, our simple table above should give them the facts they need to make an informed choice.

The table shows the number of times a company has appeared in the top ten investment performance results for regular contribution with-profits personal pension plans across all durations measured - according to annual surveys by the industry journal Planned Savings.

The Equitable Life has had a top ten placing in such surveys every year since records began in 1974.

In fact, no other company comes close to The Equitable's tally of 45 placings out of a possible 56 over that 23 year history. Scoring highly one year is laudable. but it is consistency of results year-in year-out that gives people the peace of mind they want.

Please note that not all companies have submitted returns to Planned Savings in every year.

But remember, past performance does not guarantee future performance.

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One good reason why The Equitable has given its investors such great performance over the years is

because their money gets a headstart. The Equitable has commendably low expenses and so our with-profits pension plans have the lowest charges on the market. Source: Money Management, October 1997. That means that more money is invested on your behalf.

Indeed, The Equitable received a Five Star rating for its personal pension plans in a recent survey by Money Management magazine. So, if you want to feel confident in your choice of pension plan, ask for more information today by calling (0990) 38 48 58, or by completing the coupon opposite.

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7/FINANCIAL PLANNING

THE INDEPENDENT SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER 1997

Eat, talk, drive - repeat each day

Breakfast at the Crest Hotel in Bristol is not quite the same as Breakfast at Tiffany's. This is the unglamorous side of life as an independent financial adviser (IFA). But, Roddy Kohn believes, it's all part of meeting his clients'

It's 7.30am and the breakfast meeting is to see how suitable HSBC's two-year PEP would be for my clients. Robin Kemp, managing director of HSBC. obviously thinks it is, as it provides capital security with the prospect of 20 per cent growth and matures just after the planned introduction in April 1999 of Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), Labour's new tax-saving scheme. Robin is persuasive and I'm inclined to support his view.

This is the hidden side of my "practitioner" role, meeting fund managers and company executives to keep abreast of product and market develop-

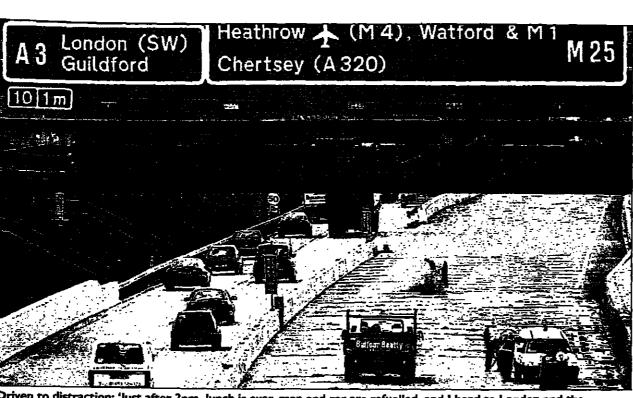
It falls into that category called "research" that appears on our fee notes to clients, to whom it must appear like a black hole into which they throw their money.

At 8.30am, I return to my office in Bristol. Twenty minutes later, I am in the Kohn Cougar offices, shouting out "Good morning" to the staff. My first iob is to look at the post. Anything of relevance will be discussed with my colleagues, Neil and June, at 9.15am.

At 9.40am, I meet two new clients, Steve and his partner, who have travelled to see me from Oxford. I start with the regulatory formalities.

We rapidly move on to the main concern - should Steve transfer a pension he has with a past employer?

Although the fund is worth ne £40,000, he is startled to the emerging markets. learn that it will cost between



Driven to distraction: 'Just after 2pm, lunch is over, man and car are refuelled, and I head to London and the excitement of the M25. Life doesn't get better than this'

£400 and £800 to find out the best course of action.

Our fees include an al-

lowance for professional indemnity, technical knowledge, regulatory fees, obtaining quotes, checking surpluses in any existing pension funds or whatever, and a whole host of other subjects concerning clients, including health and fu-In the end, I tell the client

to remember that there is £40,000 at stake and that he has a lot to lose in the long run if he is poorly advised. He confirms he wants us to proceed with the research. After they leave, it's

11.15am and I travel to Basingstoke for a client's annual review. Before arriving, there are phone calls to be made -I'm glad I've had a hands-free phone installed in the car. One of the calls is to a client in Bath to tell him he has his trustees' agreement to invest some pension fund capital in Europe and

Another call is to a client in ican system of choosing the five agenda.

London who wants to arrange an income protection plan.

We talk about her likely income, what she needs to live on and what capital can be used before she would need to make a claim. I remind her about adding waiver of premium to her existing pension policy. This would take over the premium payments if she is ill for six months or more and will go on paying them until her selected retirement date or she returns to work.

This is something a permanent health policy will not do as the income it pays is not regarded as relevant earnings for pension purposes.

At 12.45pm, it's time to lunch with my client and we cover all his policies and investments. Some of his funds have done exceptionally well. showing returns of more than 40 per cent, while others have had mixed fortunes, especially his Johnson Fry Hv5 PEP and Hy1 single-company PEP. These are based on an Amer-

highest-yielding shares in an index with a computer-driven "buy and self" operation for

regular changes. Both PEPs are suffering from a range of factors including regulation and poor sector sentiment. I advise him to sit tight because we always encourage clients to take at least a five-year view with investments, to which he agrees.

Just after 2pm, lunch is over, man and car are refuelled. and I head to London and the excitement of the M25. Life doesn't get better than this. Once again, hands-free, I use the phone to call the office and check my messages. It may be a pain, but the mobile phone is probably the most effective new technology toy that I own.

Ian Bowden calls from the Personal Investment Authority. the financial regulator, to request confirmation that the minutes of the last Small Business Practitioners Panel, that I chair, can be approved. We also chat briefly about next month's

Photograph: David Rose

Arriving at my London destination, it's now 3.30pm and I meet one of my female clients. We complete a gift and loan trust application form for a £100,000 investment.

This includes fielding the odd technical question from the company accountant, whose dry sense of humour and laidback manner disguises a razorsharp mind.

As the meeting ends, the rush hour has started. I use the slow journey home to make some useful dictation, warning clients about the dangers of high-income bonds. Among the phone calls that interrupt is one from the office to discuss tomorrow's agenda. My day finishes when I ar-

rive back in Bristol at 7.45pm. The night's my own, with no client meetings and no business dinners arranged - only tomorrow to look forward to.

Roddy Kohn is an IFA at Kohn Cougar of Wellington House, Wellington Park, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2UR (0117-946 6384).

Get advice on putting your money to work

Setting your financial affairs in order is no easy task. Over time, you may have started up savings, investment and insurance schemes. But are these still appropriate for your needs or could your money be put to better use elsewhere? Abigail

Choosing the right investments can mean the difference between a mediocre and a good return on your money. while a review of your insurance and pension provisions could save you thousands of pounds over the long term.

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All financial advisers seek to give good advice but only IFAs can give "best advice". This is because IFAs scour the whole market, looking for the best financial products most suitable for your needs. unlike tied agents and appointed company representatives, who can only advise on and sell products from the company they work for.

Being able to choose from the whole market tends to be better than only being offered one company's products. No company will always have the best products or best performing funds in every investment sector. And few companies offer the full range of investments and savings products available on the market. With an IFA, not only do you know you are getting expert advice, but it also is unbiased. Of course, this advice does not come for free.

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can pay a fee or they can receive commission from the financial products they sell you.

IFAs working on a fee basis charge from £50 an hour. The rate may vary depending on the type of advice you want. This may seem steep, but other professionals, such as accountants and solicitors. can charge more. Alternatively, your IFA

may be commission-based.

You will not have to pay any

money up-front for the advice

natively, the IFA can split the

By law, your IFA has to tell

commission with you.

Montrose seeks advice.

you receive, but you will pay it indirectly. Many financial companies pay commission to advisers when they sell one of their products, and this is added to the cost of the financial product you buy. If your IFA is fee-based, he or she can ask for no commission to be charged or paid. Alter-

for your financial security.

you how much commission he or she is being paid. Commission payments vary between 1 per cent and 5 per cent of the amount you invest, depending on the product. Beware a sting in the tail: commission on some regularpremium products is based on a calculation of the premiums you are expected to pay over the lifetime of the product. This is typically an up-front payment, which means most of your first year's premiums

will go in commission. IFAs have to hold professional qualifications. The basic qualification is the Financial Planning Certificate, but some IFAs go on to take more advanced exams and will specialise in a particular area such as investments, tax planning or mortgage business. Choosing an IFA you are

happy with can take time, bearing in mind that you For copies, contact the IFAP want to deal with someone

one of two ways. Either you you are comfortable with and who you can trust. Recommendations from friends, a solicitor or an accountant can be a good starting point.

You may even find your solicitor or accountant is able to help you himself," says Anne-Marie Martin, acting chief executive of IFA Promotion (IFAP), a body which promotes financial advice.

"Some solicitors and accountants are qualified to give independent financial advice. If they are not qualified themselves, they may have an IFA arm or someone in the company who is qualified and deals specifically with financial planning."

To check if your solicitor or accountant is authorised to offer independent financial advice, you can call the Financial Services Authority central register on 0171-929

If you are unable to find an IFA via a recommendation, you can call the IFAP hotline on 0117-971 1177 for details of three IFAs in your area. IFAP recommends talking to at least a couple of IFAs before deciding which one to select. Most firms are happy to give potential clients the names of two of their clients.

When you meet an IFA, he or she should carry out an indepth fact-find into your financial arrangements. This enables them to build up an overall picture of your financial affairs. Your IFA can review your arrangements. It could be that some of your investments are no longer performing particularly well and you could do more with your money elsewhere.

IFAP has produced a guide on the types of financial advice that are available, as well as a factsheet on how your IFA is paid. hotline on 0117-971 1177.

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Across the board, London is changing

Among those who have never visited London, and many who live in the city, Mayfair will forever be a rich - and expensive - navy blue, while poor Old Kent Road remains a dull brown. The reason? Monopoly, the ever-popular game which appears to have set house prices in those areas in stone. Felicity Connell investigates whether the board's assumed property

Monopoly's fame spreads far and wide. So wide, in fact, that the US resort of Atlantic City has even named its streets after those on the board.

valuations still hold true.

But while Mayfair and the Old Kent Road are still well known, what about Vine Street, Coventry Street or Northumberland Avenue? A black cab driver may know their whereabouts, but a foreign Monopoly player might be somewhat disappointed.

Thèse streets are part of a list which Victor Watson, head of Waddington's, the games firm, compiled as prime London landmarks with his secretary after a stroll around the city in the 1930s. Today, with the massive development of parts of London that would never have been seen from a tour bus 60 years ago, it may be time to update the Monopoly board:

Savills Property Consultants ranks Chelsea, Knightsbridge and Kensington as the top three most desirable residential locations in central London.

Knightsbridge and Sloane Street would have to be the new élite areas on the new board. Harrods was, after all, world famous even before the Fayed connection. And Harvey Nichols, (Absolutely Fabulous store, darling) ranks even

Does Mayfair still deserve a top spot? Of course, the area is prime office location for smaller companies who want a central London base. But, as Robert Bailey of Strutt & Parker, the estate agent, points out in the inimitable salesspeak that can make silk purses out of sow's ears: "Mayfair now appears good value for money in 's comparison with other prime ar-

"We can only see this trend inof many international compa- per sq ft, the most expensive be-

nies in London giving up their gracious offices, converted from what were originally private hous- about) to venture south of the rives (into) modern day office com-

Good value for money, indeed. For instance, Strutt & Parker has just sold a two-bedroom flat of just under 1,000 sq ft, in Charles Street, Mayfair, for £250,000. With other parts of central London fetching double that amount, Mayfair may have to be off our new board.

On the other hand, Park Lane must remain in second place, with its views over Hyde Park and, partly, as access to Oxford Street. Other areas of W1, most notably "Fitzrovia", estate agent talk for the streets around Oxford Circus - Portland St, Great Titchfield St - are becoming as popular as Mavfair.

Conversions from offices to luxury blocks are dragging in residents who want a central London address, while Oxford Street itself remains one of the richest shopping streets in London, despite some of the tackier shops along its length. Bond Street also holds its place, particularly with the birth of the designer megastore - Versace, Donna Karan, and the oth-

If Northumberland Avenue were to go, one would at least expect Whitehall to be unchanged. Not at all. "It seems now that nothing can be taken for granted in Westminster," says a spokesman for London Residential Research of an area with a severe homelessness

The Treasury Building in are Whitehall is under threat from de-most visitvelopers, and "if 25 or more residential units are proposed, Westminster planners might just seek a social housing component. Not many people would have ex- we must go to the real tourist pected council housing in the Treasury building."

Not all changes to the board higher among the shopping in an area's fortunes. For instance, Wapping can rightfully claim the place of Fleet Street and Strand loses out to the South Bank, which along with its galleries, theatres and concert halls also has one of the new prestigious addresses in London, the White

The building overlooks the river, with apartments selling at an average of £450 per sq ft, and penthouses at £1.5m. Further along on the Albert Embankment, Peninsular Heights creasing with the decentralisation penthouses fetch around £800

ing a cool £3.25m.

It is now respectable (just

From Long Acre, Covent Garden, take a trip along to St Katherine's Dock. With its combination of office and residential use the Isle of Dogs easily deserves

sought after addresses in London", with penthouses at Dunbar Wharf and Pierhead

"That's all very well," you cry, "but I wouldn't want to live there!" You don't have to. You follow the lead of Far Eastern landlords. Buy it up, and charge everyone

According to computer-assisted studies of Monopoly games, Vine Street. Marlborough Street and

ed sites on the board. For a like

sites of Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus and Charing Cross Road.

are due solely to the rise and fall up a peg, leaves Caledonian come full circle. However, the

From here it is but a short slippery slope to Whitechapel Road and Old Kent Road, which still "represent the last resort of the underdog to hold out against the oppressive forces of the Navy Blue

The original train stations on the board represented the different railway companies. After nationalisation they became

er, so the South Bank ranks alongside Covent Garden and Soho, both of which have seen huge increases in residential desirability, particularly with the removal of Covent Garden market in the late 1970s. Residential space in both Soho and Covent Garden, nonetheless, has strong competition from the smaller trendy businesses and shops.

The penthouse in the Berkeley Tower, Canary Riverside, is priced at over £2m, and both Fairbriar Homes and Barratt are vying to produce "one of the most Lock, respectively.

else the rent.

for-like comparison,

Angel Islington, having moved and now we have Road to slot in with Euston Road different companies are now far be only gaze in envy at their neighbours, the conservation area of Barnsbury and spiralling Blooms-

VISITING

too numerous to mention, so the stations will gain a place in view of their importance. King's Cross is still there, but will soon lose its lion's share of the Channel Tunnel responsibility to Stratford, in the East. Victoria deserves a place, being the gateway to the rest of the world via Gatwick Airport. Marylebone, in reality only hanging on by the skin of its teeth, can go, as can Fenchurch Street. That leaves a space for Paddington to

serve the west of England. And as for the Free Parking square, parking at any price would

the new board. In central London you can expect

Bloomsbury

£120

Fitzrovia

E100

to pay up to £100,000 for a garage. Rents are more affordable, if you can secure one, at around £5,000 per year for a garage, £1,500 for an underground space. So along with the green houses and red hotels, little black garages will really clobber your opponents.

And forget about going straight to jail. The easiest way to

Fictitious property games: should the world-famous Monopoly board, loved by immobilise a player is to wheel- millions, be subject to change as areas in London move in and out of fashion?

£100

THE ANGEL,

CHACK

Pests can prove lethal for your finances

A midnight trip to the kitchen to pour a drink for her toddler led Fiona Brandhorst to the fleshcreeping discovery that something other than cobwebs was alive and thriving in her house. Here, she explains what to do to get rid of creepycrawlies that can go crunch in the night.

Stepping, or rather sliding, barefooted on a slimy slug the size of a small rodent, sent me reeling. It was just the start of a nocturnal nightmare – slugs of all sizes were regularly found hanging out of the larder or allently gathering in a great pow-wow on my ceramic tiles.

Criss-crossed silvery trails were the tell-tale signs every morning of our unwanted visttors. We tried alug pellets - too dangerous for the cat and our loddler; grapefruit halves filled with beer placed strategically in the garden - a waste of good beer and they didn't catch any

slugs anyway. In the end the solution was simple and environmentally friendly. Plant a half barrel in the garden, fill it with water, add plants and the magic ingredient - nature's slug predator – the common frog. Our house is now slug free and our hostas are no longer reduced to a stalk by midsummer.

However, some pests are more difficult to track down. Jane Hayball discovered a loaf of bread savaged in her kitchen one morning. "Then we kept finding walnuts scattered around the house, but the crunch came when some avocados disappeared one by one."

Mice were eliminated from the suspects list as "there were no droppings", and Jane finally laid the blame on squirrels. We found a hole under the doorstep where we thought they could possibly get in."

Jane boarded up the hole and thought her squirrel problems were over

until a neighbour spotted a few popping in and out of a gap under the eaves. This time she was taking chances and called in a

trol

ny, who discovered a drey in the roof space.

They put down poison and returned to remove the corpses. Jane sees squirrels as major pests. "They love chewing and could do quite a lot of damage."

Whatever pest decides to descend on your house, you're unlikely to get much help from your local authority. Environmental officers will probably point you in the direction of the Yellow Pages to get the problem sorted out yourself, if they don't have their own pest-control teams.

Following complaints from neighbours or tenants, some councils may take legal proceedings against private householders or landlords who refuse to get rid of pests. In very extreme cases they may even pay for the work to be carried out. although the risk of not recouping the money is a big deterrent to them.

Josef Church's landlord was most co-operative when he was informed that his large Victorian house in Hornsey, north London, was infested with cockroaches. "I was quite disgusted," says Josef, who was away in his native Sweden when his flatmates signed the contract for the house.

"But I suppose it wasn't the landlord's fault and he did act quickly." After the treatment the flatmates found dead cockroaches everywhere, but a few weeks later they started finding the odd live one again. ing me up from Sweden terri-



"I haven't seen any for about a week," notes Josef, "and I'm pleased I haven't ever found one in my bedroom. I've been keeping all my food in bags just in case. My mother kept call-

bly stressed at the thought of them in my food." Residents in Ridley Road in

London's East End took matters into their own hands a few years ago when Hackney council seemed to ignore the rats in-

festing nearby derelict shops. Rubbish from the adjacent street market provided the rats with a ready source of food and after dark they were every-

A petition had no effect so

Bats in the belfry: but Josef Church was inundated instead with cockroaches in his house in north London. I kept all my food in bags just in case' Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

> the residents took action. A microscopic but just as lethal, dead rat on the desk of the appropriate council official was considered essential. After much discussion one resident ~ ex-forces and a good shot - reluctantly volunteered to do the business with an air rifle. Watched by his pyjama-clad neighbours in the dead of night he took aim. Unfortunately for him, the pellets were not fatal and the rats lived to run another day. When the shops were finally demolished, the residents' worst fears were realised when the rats rehoused themselves in nearby basement

Tony Stephens, of Rentokil Initial, says that despite some horror stories the most common pests are house mice, which are usually removed by laying poisonous baits (note: DIY traps

need chocolate, not cheese). During the summer months Rentokil is deluged with calls from people discovering wasp or black ant nests. With around 15,000 to 20,000 wasps in a nest the size of a football you can have some sympathy with seasonal entomophobics. In fact, stored product insects (or SPIs as they're known in the business) are making themselves at

home in our pastas and cereals. "Although these insects are harmless," adds Mr Stephens, "you can understand the horror of finding an insect doing back-

stroke in your cereal bowl." Bina and Andrew Martin-Davis's pests were similarly

especially to their savings. We'd just moved into our house in Surrey when I was suddenly covered in literally hundred of tiny bites," says Andrew. "The previous owner had five cats, so we suspected

RINGS/CROSS

STATION .

A spray from a pet shop didn't work and even treatments by the local environmental health department failed to shift the fleas. "Our son had just started crawling," adds Bina, "but I couldn't put him down on the floor - it was a very stressful time."

There was only one solution. They removed all the floor coverings and sprayed each room around the edges with a pesticide bought from the local vet. "We hadn't budgeted for replacing carpets, some of them were brand new," says Andrew. "but we had to get rid of the fleas. It cost us around £3,000 by the

end of it." They've been told that the eggs could lay dormant for some time and vibrations and central heating can make them hatch. "It's a good excuse for not doing any DTY," Andrew

And finally, the man from Rentokil would like to set the record straight about a certain dinner party tale. Rats do get into drains and, yes, they can swim up around the U-bend. His advice? Keep your toilet

şeat down.

The easy way to Yuletide

By 25 December, fiveand-a-quarter-million real Christmas trees will have changed hands for an average of around £15 apiece. Five-and-a-quartermillion households will have struggled to stand the thing upright wedged in a bucket with house bricks or fiddled with those infuriating screws on stands which are alleged to be the final solution to leaning-`tree syndrome. Rosalind Russell looks at the alternatives to pine needles on the carpet.

According to the British it sticking through the sun-Christmas Tree Growers' Association, more than 50 per cent of the trees will be Nor- for the charity Barnardos way spruce, 35 per cent nonneedle-drop Nordmann or Noble firs and the rest pine come with real pine cones ator blue spruce. Although tached to the branches and most families in the UK put a pack of coordinating decup a Christmas tree, only 20 per cent choose real ones.

But hardly any will achieve the twinkly elegance you see in magazines like Perfect Home, where the trees never seem to have light cable draped around like biggest sellers so far this spaghetti, or are capped by year is a fibre-optic shimmer an old fairy that has seen bet-

Alive to the angst of the are stroked. house-proud but hopeless tree decorator, a number of companies have offered easy options. The Marks & Spencer Home Catalogue has two sizes of artificial trees already fitted with lights: the 4ft 6ins with 80 lights is £65 and the 6ft6ins with 144 lights is £100 (mail order only). The Argos 6ft pre-lit artificial tree, with

150 lights, costs £49.99. M&S will also deliver a real Nordmann fir, about 6ft high (without decorations or lights) for £65 plus delivery, but including a water reservoir - a cut tree can drink up to a pint of water a another delivday. Although that is about ery. The disdouble the price of most play, draped garden centre Nordmann firs that size, at least you will not have an argument with your partner over the shape Indian type or have to drive home with

The mail order catalogue sells two artificial-tree styles (frosty or traditional) which orations. The 6ft tree with 72-piece pack costs £54.98, plus P&P.

Really trendy home-owners would not be caught dead with a traditional tree, real or otherwise. One of the effect "tree", the tips of which change colour as they

They do not generate heat, so are safe for children who find them fascinating. They sell for around £49.99 in Selfridge's and other big stores. And John Lewis has progressed the minimalist bundle of twigs idea (promoted heavily by interior designers) by producing a gold twig tree and a silver apple-and-pear tree (£39 each). Heals has sold so

many of its red chilli pepper tree lights (at £26.50 a set) i has had to order around handsome 5ft cowboy-and-

store in King's Road. Luminosa series No 3. is an London, provoked a rush among owners of loft and varehouse conversions. for whom a trad tree s ahout as chic as Pot Noodles. But Katrien van

> proximate) the Luminosas yet come out at the are supplied with bulbs and on of the alternafitted plug. They are part of e tree. Trained as van Liefferinge's inflatable a cabinet maker, light objects series, which she van Liefferinge, says was inspired by an inwho lives in Leeds, took an terest in fairytales and nours degree comics. in three-di-

Liefferinge might

It this is all too easy and you prefer your tree to provide a challenge, there is aldesign at ways the one offered in the Bits & Pieces mail-order catalogue. It is a three-dimensional, double-sided 2ft jigsaw of a Christmas tree. It costs £12.95 and comes with 23 mini ornament puzzles which fit on the assembled tree. There are 750 pieces, so it you start now it might just be ready by Christmas

inflatable, made of PVC,

punctuated with white or

multi-coloured fairy lights.

making them look like

bizarre but jolly sorcerers'

hats. The 1m size is £75 and

the 1.2m is £120. Individual-

ly made (so sizes are ap-

M&S Home Catalogue 0345 902 902; M&S real tree delivery 0345 704 704; Argos 0990 600161; Barnardos 0870 6039090: Selfridge's 0171 629 1234: John Lewis 0171 629 7711; Heals 0171 636 1666; Katrien van Liefferinge (1) 13 2570241; Bits & Pieces 01379 649 629.

For an Internet list of members of the British Christmas Tree Growers' Association to find one near you, www.bctga.org.uk THREE TO VIEW/WITH STABLE



Lodge Oast near Tonbridge in Kent was converted into a home 13 years ago. It has a 23ft by 11ft entrance ball and three reception rooms, one of which is in the second roundel, 15ft16in in diameter. The five-bedroom house stands in more than five acres of fenced paddocks and gardens and has a cedarwood stable block and a 45ft haybarn. Agents Langford Rae O'Neill is asking £525,000 (01732 740745).



East Leigh, in the Dales National Park seven miles from Leyburn, is a stone-built house with views across Coverdale, With three reception rooms, three bedrooms and a games room, the property has a white Aga and a conservatory with a vine and a stone flag floor. The 23ft drawing room has a fireplace with castiron stove, marble surround and antique carved mantel. There is a stone stable and a five-acre field with mains troughed water supply. £225,000 through GA Town & Country (01969 623451).



Rookery House, a Grade II-listed timber-framed farmhouse in Felsham, near Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk, is typical of the area, familiar to viewers of the TV series Lovejoy which was filmed around the village. The five-bedroom house has drawing dining and sitting rooms, and in the half-acre gardens has a range of outbuildings, including stable, workshop and store, £295,000 through Bedfords (01284 769999).

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11/PROPERTY

A break for the border? Don't expect an easy ride



At the border you have to produce Tricky move: make sure the furniture looks used, if you relocate to another country - and you may need specialist help with the red tape

during the recent French lorry strike had a sharp reminder of the days of border bureaucracy. Such a firm's clients might have found themselves rattling around an empty home, while their worldly possessions were

a detour through Switzerland

stuck at the frontier. Penny Jackson reports on the perils of relocating abroad.

So used is everyone to the free movement of goods within the EU, that the requirements of those countries on the outside can be forgotten. A move to Zurich may seem, on the face of it, to be as easy as moving to Bonn, but it is far more complicated.

proof of employment and a permit to reside in the country, as well as other forms, including an undertaking not to sell anything within 12 months. If you don't have the forms, the customs charge a bond which can stretch to thousands of pounds," says William Karslake, of Ward-Thomas Removals. They can even impound the vehicle, although that is rare."

He suggests checking with companies offering a service to Europe that th the con clearing customs. "Too many people learn the hard way. Everyone knows you need a lot of paperwork for eastem Europe, but they forget that places such as the Channel Islands and Gibraltar are not in the EU. It is the responsibility of the removals firm to have the correct documentation."

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The cost of moving a household across the Channel varies between £3,500 for, say, Paris, and £5,500 for the south of Spain, at Ward-Thomas prices. It can cost a great deal more to move back into the UK, since services are costly on the Continent. One couple who moved to Denmark for long periods found it cost them £2,000 to move there with a small operator, and £5,000 to return. The second time round they employed a British company to collect their goods from Denmark.

It is also worth reminding people that where duty is payable, it is not a good idea to take new goods. "Make sure there are signs of use", is the figures for the UK are almost Karslake's advice, since anything toms. Not a problem for one family moving to France, who not only uprooted their Aga, but took two oak trees from their garden, roughly cut into lorry-length planks.

Even within EU countries, the detail of settling down can be harder than arranging transport. Most companies employ relocation agents to smooth the way, and a European association is in the process of being

At present, the UK leads the field within Europe, with France having the second most organised relocation industry. According to Tad Zurlinden, chief executive of the Association of

means "the state of the place") require Relocation Agents, the emphasis differs. Some 86 per cent of the hours of an expert's time. agents' clients in mainland Europe are

They are massive documents companies, and 14 per cent individuals, which detail anything from cracks in while in the UK it is closer to half and the parquet to marks on the carpet. Unscrupulous landlords would make In Europe, 80 per cent want to rent the most of them, but now tenants are and only 20 per cent to buy, whereas beginning to be better protected."

reversed. Patricia Roe, a partner in politan centres it is becoming more common for them to be included, finds She says: "You have to know the Helmut Berg, of RSB Deutschland, a German relocation firm.

Apart from help with registering tration and while some [areas] are very and opening bank accounts, crosswelcoming, others, like central Bruscultural seminars prove useful. "If someone is working with a German team, it does help if they know about the culture and how things are done. This equally applies to the German employees, of course," adds Herr

But when it comes to orientation - part of a relocation agent's brief is suddenly cut short", says Ms Roe. Even inventories, or the so-called spare a thought for Monique Lametat des lieux (which, roughly translated. ontagne, head of relocation at the Eur-

opean Bank. When its staff started moving into the Central Asian republics, her logistical nightmares

She recently arranged for an English family to move to Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, which involved some 20 border crossings, "They took In Germany, it belos to know that all their own furniture, since out your accommodation may possibly be there it is either extremely ornate or out dried food twice a year. In the winter some accommodation does not have a regular supply of fuel, and we are having to arrange for their own generator to be installed. Then you have medical care and security to worry about," she says.

> And now, after all that, she may well have to start all over again; the Kazakh government is looking for a new capital city.

Association of Relocation Agents directory, 01273 624155; Map Relocations, 0032 2658 8080; RSB Deutschland, 0049 69 6 0310 91; Ward-Thomas Removals, 0171 4980144.



PENNY JACKSON

Waves from Far East fail to brake home market

Does any buyer in a new London development ask about the effects of Far Eastern investment? Do they worry that a falling-off in sales will make waves in the home market? Not according to Tom Marshall of Cluttons Docklands office: "They never asked before and they aren't asking now.

"What they do want to know, though, is how many buyers from the Far East are owner-occupiers. That is far more important for them, because understandably they don't want to buy into a development that is predominantly rented out."

Although Far Eastern investors have been of enormous help to the London market as a whole in the past few years by providing a sold financial base for the developer, the strength of the home market is far more important.

Savills Research finds the percentage of Far Eastern buyers of new build in the Docklands to be eight per cent. At the present time, the success or failure of a development selling in the Far East is hard to determine. Tom Marshall saw two wellknown developers in central locations return with entirely different stories - one had done well, the other very badly.

Barratt, for instance, might well have held its breath during the recent turmoil in the stock markets having sold 50 units at its Globe View development in Upper Thames Street to buyers in Hong Kong in September. Nevertheless, none of the buyers has withdrawn. Prices start at £180,000, rising to £700,000.

Barratt does not take more than 30 per cent of any development abroad. However, where UK buyers might benefit is where developers either decide it is not worth marketing in the Far East at all, or they cut the number of units for sale there, putting more the way of the British purchaser.

The quality of stock going to auction these days has vastly improved. No longer is it a course of last resort for the vendor, whether private or institutional. At Savills second national auction held in London last week, Thornbridge Hall, a grade II listed neo-Tudor house with a stable block, sold for £850,000 to a Cheshire businessman who intends to restore it for his family's use.

Private individuals, as opposed to dealers, who imagine they can pick up a bargain may find inemserves didding against like-minded duvers. Even so, Robert Weaver of Savilis finds it gives the most accurate picture of the current market sineethere can be no back-room negotiations: "No one's hand is being forced", he says. "Nor is there any reason to assume that the property has some inherent problem."

On South Ferry Island in Liverpool's Docklands, Crosby Homes is intending to launch the remainder of its Coburg Quay development over Christmas and the New Year. As the first residents move in, so the next phase, St Lawrence Quay, will be introduced. Apparently, the site appeals across the spectrum from "retired merchant seamen to young professionals." Prices at Coburg Quay start at £88,950, Sales : 0151 7342220.

Kari Poli and

Scott: despite

a favourable

survey, their

three-storey

riddled with

dry rot from

basement to

rafters; it

cost £13,000

to put right

Photograph:

Kaipesh

Lathigra

out to be

house turned

'Requires investigation': the dreaded words that can make a survey valueless

Eighty per cent of people, through either naïvety or stupidity, do not have a full survey carried out when buying a house. They rely on valuation reports, a much less complete picture of the property. Ginetta Yedrickos, who was one of them, offers her personal excuses, but wonders have helped anyway.

We talked a lot, and he seemed pasin the about houses, which in-pared confidence." Mr Poll and Ms Sept received a "huge report which the surveyor went through in exbinstive detail." It mentioned dry The and suggested "further invest-gation". But the surveyor reassured Mr Poil and Ms Scott that it looked like a localised attack, so they need

not worry.

walked upstairs and immediately spotted dry rot in a different place to the "localised spot".

"I spent a nightmare Saturday ripping plaster off walls. It was borrible finding more and more, and realising how much it would cost."

The three-storey home was riddled from basement to rafters, and on the dry rot?

leagues are put in an impossible position. Vendors jump up and down if we try to have a good look, and buyers leap on us because they haven't understood the more significant aspects. Fear of litigation makes us stick in caveats left, right and centre, and reports become worthless.

David Parkin, a chartered sur-

On completion day Mr Poll veyor, believes that trivia does creep into reports, and that much hinges on the definition of "significant": "For one punter a leaky tap staining the bath is significant: to another it's irrelevant."

knows how daunting Belgian bureau-

right person to get things moving.

Everyone must have commune regis-

sels, can take months. It is a nightmare

When it comes to leases, she finds

because you need it for everything."

the difference between a fixed term

and an open-ended lease poses a

trap for the unwary. "It is easy to make

an expensive mistake if an assignment

cracy can be.

But he believes that talking to clients can lead to misunderstandings, and is unnecessary if the surveyor has written a good report:

can be proved that the surveyor made a serious mistake when assessing your property? Well, the cards are stacked against homebuyers. Even if you are able to prove in court that the surveyor missed major faults that later prove expensive to rectify, you will still have to show that the property

the neighbourhood.

Harriet Johns is a rare case of someone who won such a legal battle, albeit out of court. One of the 20 per cent who had a survey done, she didn't "switch off". A survey of her Victorian property had shown no major problems. All was well until cracks appeared: "They

ened. Ms Johns started a legal battle for compensation: "It was lengthy and stressful, and by the end I dreaded opening letters." Ms Johns found the costs enormous both financially and emotionally. Three years later the surveyor settled out of court and paid her £8,000 towards the cost of repairs and legal bills.

For those unable to face a legal

battle there's always arbitration, a process which, until last week. could safely be described as farcical. Surveyors had to agree to at-

tend and, unsurprisingly, only 68 cases were heard in 10 years. But the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors voted, at their extraordinary general meeting on Thursday, to make arbitration compulsory from next year. This move

gives the chance of redress to buvers who are dissatisfied with a survey if they feel they have been misadvised.

Perhaps the 20 per cent are right to be smug, after all.

 Valuation report, around £170, is for the building society's security. It is not a survey.

Home buyers' survey and valuation, around £330, not for older or unusual properties.

 Building survey, around £450. A detailed but not exhaustive report. Make sure you understand the more significant findings, and be prepared to pay for specialist in-

vestigation for problem areas. • Any problems? Arbitration is compulsory from next year, and will cost £200. A quick, inexpensive way to get an independent decision on your case without going to court.



Burnt fingers for hot car speculators

If there's a bubble, it has to burst. Those who bought the Mercedes SLK at an inflated prices in the hope of selling on at a profit will have had their fingers burnt. The Jaguar XJ220 was another dud for speculators. But, James Ruppert discovers, there are always opportunities.

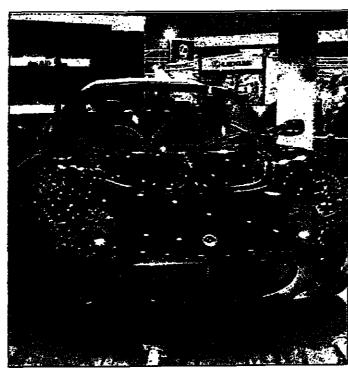
You only get what you pay for and when it comes to cars sometimes the list price just is not enough to buy the model of your dreams. If there is a queue for the car you want, instead of waiting years for delivery, then pay a little premium and get it parked on your drive tomorrow. That is exactly what happened earlier this year with the brilliantly marketed Mercedes SLK.

A sexy supercharged little roadster which at the push of a button became a proper metal-topped coupé and it was priced at only £29,500. That is cheap for a Mercedes, so the SLK was never going to be short of customers. So unless you were a Spice girl, or Tim Henman, the chances were you could not have one. However, if you paid anything up to

of premium is no longer required. A casual flick through the more prestigious motoring classified ads in one newspaper turned up almost 30 SLKs. According to one Mercedes

dealer, "The problem is that everyone ordered them in silver, a traditional Mercedes colour, mostly with a red interior. They are now everywhere and anyone who thought that they could make killing may well get their fingers burnt. There is now no reason to pay anything more than list price for this car." Even so, dealers are still quoting 18 months' delivery, but those who needed to be seen in an SLK before the Joneses have either paid a premium or can now take their leisurely pick. As supply meets demand and the models roads, then the market inevitably calms down.

Other models whose premium price bubbles have burst include the over list price at £41,800. He was find-BMW Z3. Porsche Boxster and Lotus Elise. Like the SLK they were reputedly commanding prices ignificantly above their retail value. The BMW has probably hit the ground hardest, because underneath that James Bond-starring retro roadster styling is a humble 3-series Compact as many owners have discovered. The latest six-cylinder 2.8 version now makes the original 1.9 seem ordinary and there are dozens on sale. Another distorting factor is the increasing numbers of left-hand-£10,000 over the list price an SLK drive Z3s, SLKs and Boxsters arrivcould have been yours. But that sort ing from the Continent. The strong premium models I have know in my pound has inevitably helped and easily undercut the British retail price by up to £10,000 in some cases. That is not good news to the private Porsche Boxster owner who was of-



become a more familiar sight on the Going, going, down: the Lotus Elise, left, the BMW Z3 and Porsche Boxter

fering his 3,000-mile car at just £500 ing that only car dealers were ringing him up, and offering £5,000 less than he originally paid.

You cannot talk premium cars without talking to one man in particular. Tom Hartley. Never backward in pushing his premium car business forward, the ever quotable Mr "I may not manufacture cars, but I do manufacture their prices" Hartley is keen to reveal how good the the SLK has been to him this year.

"We had around 30 per cent of the supply, which means we sold over 130. I'd say it is one of the strongest

But its premium life is over and Mr Hartley has moved on to another Mercedes, the CLK 320, which now commands up to £10,000 over

the list price, and the latest Porsche £50,000 deposit. Now, the Jaguar 996, "I have sold seven of those so far and some Porsche dealers haven't even had delivery of their demonstrator models yet."

Proof positive that some areas of the premium price market-place is as dead as a dodo, is the dodo-like Jaguar XJ220. Back in the late Eighties Ferraris F40 and Porsche's 959 supercars became £500.000 must-have toys and other manufacturers though they could join in.

So did the premium-priced speculators, hence the tragically mistimed Jaguar XJ220. An impressive car. but in the harsh economic reality that was 1992 £415,554 plus VAT looked a lit-

The lawyers got involved once the speculators could smell their burnt no car I can't supply, at a price." walk away and leave behind a Jaguar 01277 216161.

dealer Grange has the last remaining. R-registered, left-hand-drive XJ220s on sale, for £127,550. Plus VAT of course.

Although the Hartleys of this world see them at closer to £100,000

And are there any tips for the future? Mr Hartley does not hesitate in naming the forthcoming M Class Mercedes, an American-built Range

"Already sellers are asking me how much it is worth and buyers want to know how much it will cost for immediate delivery. Like the SLK it will be very good for my business and it will definitely fetch a £5,000-plus premium. As I've always said, there is fingers and finally were relieved to Tom Harrley 01283 762762; Grange



GAVIN GREEN

Any car you like, as long as it's green

As posturing politicians and Carisma GDI models (45.6) embattled environmentalists meet in Kyoto to help save the planet, it's a good time to look at bow we humble drivers can contribute to a greener, more cheerful.

Let's get straight to the point: what's the greenest car on sale in Britain? The most fuel-efficient car, according to EU fuel economy figures, is the Seat Ibiza 1.9 TDi, at

58.9 mpg. But isn't that a diesel, and aren't diesels dirtier than petrol cars? They use less fuel, so create less carbon dioxide, the primary issue discussed in Kyoto. But they pump out more gases linked to respiratory illnesses. Mind you, modern car diesels are miles better than buses and taxis. Nowadays, they're pretty clean.

Fine, but I need something bigger than an Ibiza. And I don't want a car named after a chair. What's the most fuel-efficient car I can buy that can comfortably seat four people and carry some luggage? A Volkswagen Passat TDi (53.2 mpg). The turbodiesel Passat is not just the most fuel-frugal big family car, it's also one of the best. Nowadays, you don't lose any style or driving pleasure by buying economical

I'm still not sure about a diesel though. The stuff is so smelly, and the only time I filled up a diesel car it stained my loafers. Then you're after petrol power. If you want to average over 40 mpg, there's a big list of good, small, petrol cars. You could try the Fiat Cinquecento Sporting (45.3 mpg) - which is a real hoot to drive. The Ford Ka (47.9 mpg) is also tun to arive and to look al, although the back seat is for kids only. And the Fiesta 1.25 (42.2 mpg) is a brilliant little machine, although it has a face that looks more like a carp than a car. If you need more room, the Fiat Punto

erages 41.5 mpg. I've already told you: I need more space. Then buy one of the new Mitsubishi

60 seats four easily and av-

mpg), which uses a newfangled direct-injection petrol engine, one of the new "Big" Ideas" which should see petrol power soldier on for another couple of decades. It combines diesel economy and petrol performance. In a few years, most car makers will offer direct-injection petrol engines. It's the future. short- to medium-term.

And long-term? After ally surely petrol cars will always be dirty? Not necessarily: You'd be amazed how clean a modern car's exhaust is although it still pumps our carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas. But in terms of exhaust toxins, a modern car with catalytic converters and electronic engine manage. ment is about 20 times less polluting than a car from the late Seventies. Long term petrol power will disappear. though. Some electric "hybrid" cars which use both petrol and electric power are about to go on sale in Japan, one from Toyota and one from Honda. They're greener than conventional petrol cars, although they re

Longer term, we'll almost certainly see hydrogen fuel cells. Most car makers agree it's the answer. Mercedes is probably at the cutting edge. although Bill Clinton recently hinted that the Yanks" are at the forefront, as a way of mitigating their appalling environmental record. Mercedes reckons it will have a fuel-cell version of the A-class on sale in just over a decade.

In quick succession, other car makers will probably offer fuel-cell cars too. Potentially, these cars pump out no tailpipe pollution at all. The Kyoto delegates would

How much do cars contribute to global warming anyway? About 10 per cent of total carbon dioxide output, according to the OECD, But cars are the fasting growing source, owing to their explosion in the Third World. Buses and trains may be greener. But, as in the West, people would much rather

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Daewoo's time machine: it has nearly caught up with 1997

Once more, without feeling, new Daewoos have arrived. This one is an odd size and seems to have little character. But John Simister sees signs of hope ...

You'll have heard of Daewoo, the Korean conglomerate that sells its cars direct to the public and promises a whole new world of consumer-friendly carbuying. Its original range of two atric as the sales pitch was slick, but now these automotive white goods come in three new shapes and sizes. The one you see here is the middle-sized one, called Nubira

Nubira. A nubile-sounding car, you might think. Or perhaps, if you heard the name out of context, you might think it was a new brand of mobile telephone, or possibly, give or take something which might even a vowel or two, a new ballpoint pen. But no, it's a car. The company's engineers refer to it as the J100, which sounds much more high-tech. A pity the mar- yet, available as a hatchback. keting men didn't stick with it.

Daewoos are already seen as also an estate) costs £11,995 as smart buys by those who know a good car when they see one, and who find that a Daewoo does all they want from a car (go from A to B, start first time, and so on). The mainstream motor electric windows and two ceptible personality. Would I re-



cause it has closed ranks against

the maverick newcomer. Ei-

ther that, or the cars are un-

saleable second-hand, perish

the thought. To be fair, Daewoo

has seen this coming, which is

why the new cars are proper

modern machines instead of

General Motors cast-offs. Look

at a new Nubira, and you see

bigger than an Escort but small-

er than a Mondeo and not, as

The four-door saloon (there is

a 1.6-litre SE, or £12,995 as a

2.0-litre CDX which is the ver-

plenty of kit, including anti-lock

This car is a slightly odd size,

stand up on its own merits.

Rivals: Chrysler Neon 2.0 LX: £13.795. Like the Daewoo, a lot

cal division but by Sony. It

comes complete with a mobile

phone, too. It's a Panasonic, as

The body was styled by IDEA

of Turin, the engine comes

from Holden (Australia's equiv-

alent of Vauxhall, so the GM

connection is not yet dead), and

the whole project came to-

gether at Daewoo's technical

centre in Worthing. A three-part

front grille (Daewoo's heritage

rear lights give some visual in-

terest, as does the line which ex-

tends from the top of the front

wheel arch to the car's rear. But

Korean it may be, but the

of car for the money but little sophistication. Neat looks. Fiat Marea 2.0 ELX: £14,647. More power, more flair than Nu-

Daewoo Nubira 2.0 CDX

£12,995. Engine: 1,998cc, four

cylinders, 16 valves, 132bhp at

front-wheel drive. Top speed

122mph, 0-60 in 8.8sec; 25-

30mpg

5,400rpm. Five-speed gearbox.

from rally-winning Turbo version. Four-wheel drive, fine value. models was as crude and geri- trade will not touch them as airbags, plus a stereo which is member what it was like the trade-ins, true, but that is be- made not by Daewoo's electrinext day?

Worried that I would not, I took more copious notes than usual. And trying to relive the experience now, I'm having difficulty. So, let's see some of what Nubira is also cosmopolitan. I wrote. Big boot. Cup-holders in fa-

cia. No centre console - storage tray extends under dashboard. So far, so informative. Proud Daewoo crests on yellow under-bonnet filler caps. Roomy in back, but cabin narrow. Driver's seat too high despite tilt adjustment, gradations of steering wheel's height starting point) and enormous and backrest rake too coarse. Irritating chime if key left in igni-

Yes, it's coming back now. So what about when it's actually moving, rather than sitting in a some trenidation, for this is a car showroom? Floppy, gritty gearchange, steering woolly, rubstraight-ahead, car does not feel naturally stable at speed on the straight. But holds the road well, and handles bends much more precisely than you would expect from the steering. Comfortable

ride. Engine quiet, punchy too (so

bira. Well made, fun to drive. Rel-

Hyundai Lantra 1.8 Si: £12,899.

Less pace and perceived solidity

than the Nubira, but steers more

Proton Persona 1.8 SEi:

£13,365. Malaysian-built, Mit-

subishi-based, feels cheap, much

better to drive than you d expect.

Subaru Impreza 2.0 GL:

£13,610. Basks in glory reflected

ative of Bravo/Brava.

it should be with 132bhp), but accelerator snatchy.

There's some honing to do, then, before the Nubira nudges the best Western or Japanese standards, but it is, fundamentally, a proper if unremarkable late-1990s car and it does feel more solid and better-built than a Hyundai Lanira (its main Korean rival). Easy to be cynical, but open your mind. There. the notes even contain a trace of self-admonishment.

I wouldn't want a Nubira but, given the warranty and free servicing package (three years for both). I would entirely understand if you did. Who knows, one day Daewoo might even have a bistory if the Far East's economic collapse doesn't prove terminal.

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MY WORST CAR/ GLEN BAXTER'S PEUGEOT 405 GTX ESTATE

sion I drove. You certainly get I approached the Nubira with

brakes, air conditioning, four which appears to have no per-

I had a fire extinguisher with me. A pity, really

my front door. It's a Peugeot 405 haust. According to the garage, GTX estate which is now worth it needed a rebore. After just about 50p and I've resolved to 32,000 miles I had to pay out drive it into the ground, which £2,000. At the time I'd booked is the very least I can do after a holiday in France and could all the trouble it has given me. not cancel so I ended up smok-I knew that something was

wrong almost as soon as I col- every Peugeot sign I saw. lected it fresh from the showthe mistake of opening the suncators, which blew a whole load centric in a brand new car was £3,000. using hand signals. I tried to get via Norwich.

and said that there was a lot of ganda into their media. They stuck with it.

My worst car is parked outside smoke coming out of the exing through France and cursing

Of course Peugeot themroom seven years ago. I made selves weren't that interested and all I got was a snotty letter roof and switching on the indi- from their called customer. couldn't care less department. of fuses. I ended up without any I got the same response when indicators. People must have the car needed a new engine at been wondering why this ec- 62,000 miles, which cost me

home to Camberwell by only and wrote to the Peugeot in I'd bought a fire extinguisher turning left, which meant driving France enclosing examples of and managed to put it out. I lost my work in the Libération news-Just as the Peugeot was out paper and hinting that I could of warranty a cyclist stopped me get some anti-Peugeot propa- being written off. So I'm still



weren't impressed and just sent back a snotty letter with a French accent.

Me and the Peugeot reached the low point in our relationship last year when the electrics caught fire. I opened the bonnet and inside was Dante's In-By this time I'd had enough ferno. Unluckily as it turned out my no-claims bonus and the car was just a few pounds away from

Fundamentally it isn't a bad car. The bodywork is still in good condition, it's roomy, comfortable and has nice upholstery. But when it comes to minor details like the engine and electrics, the car is rubbish. That is why I will never, ever buy

Glenn Baxaer's 'Gourmet Guide' is published by Bloomsbury at £12.99 A selection of Glen Baxter tableware is available from

another Peugeot.